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A STYLISTIC AND PEDAGOGICAL ANALYSIS OF KAREN TANAKA'S INTERMEDIATE PIANO COLLECTION "CHILDREN OF LIGHT"

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A DOCUMENT APPROVED FOR THE
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

BY THE COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF

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Abstract

Karen Tanaka (b. 1961) is a Japanese composer based in Los Angeles, California. Highly versatile, Tanaka has composed in a wide variety of musical genres, including works for orchestra, piano and orchestra, solo piano, solo harpsichord, solo instruments, chamber music, choir, electroacoustics, and film music. She also served as the lead orchestrator in 2016 for the BBC television series *Planet Earth II*. Tanaka has received numerous awards for her compositions, including three Japanese prizes: the Muramatsu Prize, Keizo Saji Prize, and Bekku Prize, as well as the international Gaudeamus Prize that recognizes the excellence of young emerging composers. Tanaka's exceptional merit allowed her to receive scholarships from the Japanese government, French government, and Nadia Boulanger Foundation to study with the composers Tristan Murail in Paris and Luciano Berio in Florence during the 1980s and 1990s. One of her most prolific compositional genres is her works for solo piano.

This document examines the stylistic features and pedagogical applications of Karen Tanaka's intermediate piano collection *Children of Light* (1999). Containing twenty-five pieces, this collection emphasizes themes of nature, the environment, and endangered animals. Tanaka selected twenty animals from the *1996 IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals* to designate as piece titles, with the remaining five pieces inspired by various environments around the world. *Children of Light* is comprised of early to late intermediate piano pieces, ranging from Levels 3 through 8 in reference to Jane Magrath's leveling system.[1] A variety of musical styles are incorporated throughout the

[1]Jane Magrath, *Piano Literature for Teaching and Performance: Composers and Keyboard Works from Baroque Through Contemporary Periods* (Kingston, NJ: Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy, 2021).

collection, including modernism, minimalism, neo-romanticism, French impressionism, and Japanese aesthetic influences.

Chapter One provides a biographical sketch of the composer, a brief overview of her compositional style and output, the purpose, need, procedures, and limitations of the study, and a review of related literature. Chapter Two presents a detailed discussion of Tanaka's compositional style, influences, and output, surveys her standard and pedagogical piano works, and offers an introduction to *Children of Light* (1999). Chapters Three through Six offer compositional and pedagogical analyses for each of the twenty-five pieces in this collection, which are presented in increasing order of difficulty. The analysis of each piece begins with a compositional overview that addresses the musical elements of form, meter, rhythm, melody, harmony, and texture. A discussion of pedagogical applications follows, including guidance for introducing pieces, approaching musical and technical challenges, and suggestions for fingering, pedaling, and performance. Chapter Eight offers a summary of the study and recommendations for further research. By closely examining the intermediate piano collection *Children of Light,* the author seeks to advance the visibility and knowledge of Tanaka and her piano works so that her music can be more accessible to teach, study, and perform.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview and Biographical Sketch

Japanese-born composer Karen Tanaka (b. 1961) has developed an international presence in contemporary music since the mid-1980s. She is particularly known for her orchestral and piano works, including *Prismes* (1984), *Crystalline* (1988), and *Wave Mechanics* for chamber orchestra (1994).[2] In more recent years, Tanaka has added the orchestration of short films, animations, and documentaries to her oeuvre. In 2012, she was selected as a fellow of the Sundance Institute's Composers Lab for featured film, and in 2016, she served as the lead orchestrator for the BBC television series *Planet Earth II*.[3]

Tanaka has received distinguished prizes and awards for her compositions, including three Japanese prizes: the Muramatsu Prize in 1988, Keizo Saji Prize in 1995, and the Bekku Prize in 2005. The Bekku Prize is awarded each year to the best orchestral piece by a Japanese composer, and Tanaka won this prize with her cello concerto *Urban Prayer*. Additionally, Tanaka won the Gaudeamus Prize in 1987, an international award that recognizes the excellence of young composers. Notable commissions include Radio France, Brodsky Quartet, and the BBC Symphony Orchestra,[4] and premieres of her works have been performed by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Symphony Orchestra, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo, Berkely Symphony Orchestra, and the Los Angeles

[2] Stephen Long, "Japanese Composers of the Post-Takemitsu Generation," *Tempo* 58, no. 228 (2004): 21, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3878917.

[3] "Karen Tanaka: Biography," The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), accessed September 12, 2023, https://www.ascap.com/news-events/Events/2019/sundance/composers/Tanaka-Karen.

[4] Karen Tanaka, "Biography," in *Children of Light* (London: Chester Music Limited, 1999).

Philharmonic.[5] Since 1998, Tanaka has served as the Co-Artistic Director of the Yatsugatake Kogen Music Festival, which was previously directed by fellow Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu.

Born in Tokyo, Japan, Tanaka began her musical education with piano lessons at the age of four and composition lessons at the age of ten.[6] From 1982 to 1986, she studied piano with Nobuko Amada and composition with Akira Miyoshi in Tokyo at the Toho Gakuen School of Music.[7] Following these studies, Tanaka moved to Paris in 1986 at the age of twenty-five with the aid of a French government scholarship to study composition with Tristan Murail. She lived in Paris from 1986 to 2005, during which time she also studied composition with Luciano Berio in Florence from 1990 to 1991. Her studies in Italy were made possible by funding from the Nadia Boulanger Foundation and a Japanese government scholarship. In 2005, at the age of forty-four, Tanaka moved to the United States, where she currently lives in Los Angeles and teaches composition at the California Institute of the Arts.

Tanaka's compositional output is extensive, including works for orchestra, piano and orchestra, solo piano, solo harpsichord, solo instruments, chamber music, choir, and electroacoustics. Her compositional style is widely recognized as multi-faceted, including elements of modernism, minimalism, neo-romanticism, and French impressionism. Upon moving to Paris, Tanaka worked as an intern at the Institute for Research and Coordination in Acoustics/Music (IRCAM) while studying with Tristan Murail. Her early compositional style

[5] "Music for Film and Electronic Media, with Guest Artist Karen Tanaka," Gustavus Adolphus College, accessed September 14, 2023, https://gustavus.edu/calendar/music-for-film-and-electronic-media-with-guest-artist-karen-tanaka/62665.

[6] Karen Tanaka, "Biography," in *Children of Light* (London: Chester Music Limited, 1999).

[7] Marilyn Bliss, liner notes for Chen Yi and Karen Tanaka, *Invisible Curve*, The Azure Ensemble, New World Records 80683-2, 2008, CD.

was influenced substantially by her experiences with sound design at IRCAM, and Tanaka's first works are considered to be her most modernist in style.

Spectral music was an early influence for Tanaka. The concept of spectral music is summarized as sound evolving in and out of time.[8] This compositional approach shares commonalities in its ideals with minimalism, which would become Tanaka's next and longest phase of composition. By the 1990s, minimalism had become central to Tanaka's style, and it is now one of her most defining attributes as a composer. As her compositional style developed, it began to also include elements of neo-romanticism, which Stephen Long describes in his 2004 article as Tanaka's "unabashed embrace of tonality, gently undulating ostinatos, and diatonic melodies."[9]

The piano works of Karen Tanaka represent a substantial portion of her compositional output. Her standard solo repertoire consists of *Crystalline I, II,* and *III* (1988, 1996, and 2000), two sets of *Techno Etudes* (2000 and 2020), the three-movement work *Water Dance* (2008), and the freestanding pieces "Blue Crystal" (2014), "Who Stole the Tarts?" (2016), "Rose Crystal" (2022), and "Sensation" (2022).[10] Tanaka has also composed two piano concerti, *Anamorphose* (1986) and *Hommage en cristal* (1991).

Although her standard piano works tend to receive more recognition, Tanaka's pedagogical piano works represent a significant portion of her total output. These include four intermediate-level teaching collections: *The Zoo in the Sky* (1995), *Children of Light* (1999), *Our Planet Earth* (2011), and *Love in the Wind* (2017). Each of these collections contain fifteen to

[8] Joshua Fineberg, "Spectral Music," *Contemporary Music Review* 19, Part 2 (2000): 2, https://doi.org/10.1080/07494460000640221.

[9] Long, "Japanese Composers," 21.

[10] In the current study, standard solo repertoire is defined as works exceeding Level 10 according to the leveling system established by Jane Magrath.

twenty-five pieces, and the first three reflect Tanaka's well-known love of nature. The fourth and most recent collection, *Love in the Wind*, is described by the composer as a "musical diary, inspired by memories of my composition teacher Akira Miyoshi (1933–2013), whom I remember with profound affection and admiration."[11] This collection was published four years after Miyoshi's death.

In addition, Tanaka has composed several individual pedagogical piano pieces. These include "Lavender Field" (2000), "Northern Lights" (2002), and "Masquerade" (2013), which were all commissioned by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABSRM) as part of the *Spectrum* series, a collection of contemporary works compiled by Thalia Myers. The intention of this series is to offer pieces that represent the diversity of contemporary music writing in an accessible format for students of various ages and abilities. Tanaka's pieces are included in Volumes 3, 4, and 5 of the *Spectrum* series.

Despite her notable contributions to the contemporary repertoire, Tanaka's pedagogical piano works are not taught or performed with widespread frequency in the United States. To date, no study has been devoted entirely to her pedagogical piano works, and biographical information on the composer is limited. The current project seeks to bring more visibility to Tanaka's life and pedagogical works. This will be achieved through analyzing Tanaka's compositional style and providing compositional analyses, leveling information, and practical teaching strategies for each of the twenty-five pieces in *Children of Light.* In doing so, this research will help to make Tanaka's music more accessible for both teaching and performance.

[11] Karen Tanaka, "Preface," in *Love in the Wind* (Tokyo: Ongaku No Tomo Sha Corp., 2017).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to present a pedagogical guide to Karen Tanaka's intermediate piano collection *Children of Light* (1999). Detailed analyses of the twenty-five pieces will be presented, including guidance for introducing each piece, as well as suggestions for technical considerations, musical interpretation, and performance. As a result, this study will serve as a reference for pianists and teachers who seek to understand Tanaka as a composer and introduce her pieces to intermediate piano students.

Need for the Study

In recent years, the field of piano pedagogy has made a conscious effort to promote and advocate for underrepresented composers of diverse backgrounds. As both a woman and an Asian composer, Karen Tanaka belongs to multiple underrepresented demographics. She also represents a subset of Asian composers who received their early musical training in the East but studied further in the West. This is significant, as this combination of Eastern and Western cultures continues to influence her approach to writing music.

Tanaka is highly regarded as a composer of remarkable versatility, delicacy, and refinement. Her numerous awards suggest that her life and works would be featured in newspaper articles, magazines, concert programs, and books. Yet, this is not the case. Although Tanaka is included in discussions on Japanese composers, female Asian composers, and contemporary female composers, she is rarely featured as a central composer of a study or body of literature. The current project seeks to advance the visibility and knowledge of Tanaka and her piano works that they deserve.

Specifically, despite Tanaka's extensive output in pedagogical piano music, no study is devoted to the examination of her works in this genre. The current project seeks to minimize this gap by providing detailed analyses, leveling information, teaching strategies, ideas for musical interpretation, and performance suggestions for each of the twenty-five pieces in *Children of Light* (1999). In doing so, teachers will develop an understanding of Tanaka's compositional voice, harmonic and rhythmic language, and pedagogical writing. Using the collection *Children of Light* to understand these elements of Tanaka as a composer provides teachers with the skill set to explore her other three teaching collections and introduce these pieces to students, as well.

Procedures for the Study

This document consists of seven chapters. Chapter One serves as an introduction, providing a biographical sketch, an overview of Tanaka's compositional style and piano works, the purpose, need, procedures, and limitations of the study, and a review of related literature. Chapter Two discusses Tanaka's compositional style, influences, and output, surveys her solo piano works, and offers an introduction to *Children of Light* (1999). In the discussion of her complete solo piano works, pieces are presented chronologically and include both her standard and pedagogical solo piano output. A complete listing of Tanaka's piano works is provided in Appendix A.

Chapters Three, Four, Five, and Six analyze each of the twenty-five pieces in *Children of Light* (1999) in pedagogical detail. The decision to divide musical analyses into four chapters was made to accommodate the wide range of levels presented in this collection. Pieces are organized by difficulty using the leveling system established by Jane Magrath in her publication

Piano Literature for Teaching and Performance.[12] Chapter Three examines pieces designated as Levels 3 through 5, Chapter Four examines those designated as Level 6, Chapter Five examines pieces identified as Level 7, and Chapter Six examines those identified as Level 8. A complete leveled listing of the twenty-five pieces in *Children of Light* is presented in Appendix C.

Each of these in-depth analyses begins with a compositional overview, which includes pertinent musical aspects from the following list: form, meter, tonal center, rhythmic interest, melodic content, harmonic trends, and texture. The inclusion of each element is dependent upon its relevance to the individual piece. This is followed by a discussion of pedagogical applications. Topics addressed include musical and technical challenges, as well as suggestions for introducing pieces, pedaling, musical interpretation, and performance. It is important to note that no fingerings are included in the published score, and all fingerings notated in the musical examples of this document are suggested by the author of this study. These fingering suggestions appear in red font. Chapter 8 serves as a conclusion and includes recommendations for further research.

As part of the research of this project, a planned interview with Karen Tanaka was to be conducted by the author. The intended purpose of the interview was threefold. The first goal was to enrich the breadth of biographical information known on Tanaka. This included discussing her early influences and musical training in Japan, clarifying the dates and details of biographical information, and recalling experiences and reflections of her teachers Akira Miyoshi, Tristan Murail, and Luciano Berio. The second goal was to understand Tanaka's compositional style and phases from her own perspective. Styles to be discussed included modernism, minimalism, neo-romanticism, French impressionism, and Japanese aesthetic influences. The third goal was to

[12] Jane Magrath, *Piano Literature for Teaching and Performance,* xiv-xv.

develop a deeper understanding of Tanaka's piano works, with a particular emphasis on her intermediate piano collection *Children of Light* (1999). Topics to be addressed included the recurring theme of crystals throughout her piano works, as well as the organization of pieces, pedagogical goals, and stylistic influences presented in *Children of Light* (1999).

Although the invitation to interview with the author was initially accepted by Tanaka, the interview was later canceled by the composer, citing her full schedule and numerous deadlines for upcoming commissions. The author hopes to interview the composer at a later date.

Existing research regarding Tanaka's compositional influences and style were procured through secondary sources. Information pertaining specifically to Tanaka was accessed in dissertations, documents, theses, articles, and liner notes from audio recordings. Additional research on the distinctive aspects of her compositional approach, including spectral music, minimalism, and French impressionism, was accessed in various books, articles, and dissertations. These findings will be discussed in Chapter Two.

Limitations of the Study

While Tanaka has composed four pedagogical piano collections and three individual, freestanding teaching pieces, this study is limited to one of those collections, *Children of Light* (1999). Although a cursory discussion of the composer's other pedagogical piano collections will be presented in Chapter Two, which include *A Zoo in the Sky* (1995), *Our Planet Earth* (2011), and *Love in the Wind* (2017), a complete survey of Tanaka's pedagogical piano repertoire is beyond the scope of this study. The selection of the collection was based on the accessibility of the score for *Children of Light* in the United States, as the other three pedagogical collections are published only in Japan and not as widely available. Additionally, limiting the study to one

collection allows for a more in-depth discussion and analysis of individual pieces in the chosen collection.

While it was the author's intention to provide a more detailed biographical account of Tanaka that is more expansive and comprehensive than the information currently in circulation, this goal was deemed unattainable without the ability to interview Tanaka. Most published accounts of the composer's life are brief and contain nearly the same information. Therefore, the biographical content included in this document is limited to the information already available and is by no means an exhaustive biographical account.

Review of Related Literature

Currently, the research on Karen Tanaka's piano works, particularly her pedagogical collections, is limited. One dissertation is devoted to selected standard piano works composed by Karen Tanaka.[13] Five additional dissertations include Tanaka as one of several composers featured in studies of underrepresented composers. Although two of these dissertations reference the collection *Children of Light* (1999) within their discussions, only one of these is pedagogically-based.[14] Even within this most relevant resource, the musical analyses for the four selected pieces from *Children of Light* are rather brief. Another of these dissertations includes a more detailed discussion of a piece from Tanaka's first pedagogical piano collection, *A Zoo in the Sky* (1995). This source, titled "A Teacher's Guide to Diverse Piano Repertoire: An Annotated Bibliography of Intermediate Level Repertoire by Historically Underrepresented

[13] Mayu Nomura, "An Examination of Karen Tanaka's Approach to Minimalism: Water Dance and Techno Etudes" (DMA document, The University of Arizona, 2017).

[14] Rebecca Billock, "Selected Intermediate Piano Pieces by Seven Women of the Twentieth Century: Marion Bauer, Germaine Tailleferre, Ruth Crawford Seeger, Sofia Gubaidulina, Emma Lou Diemer, Chen Yi, and Karen Tanaka" (DMA document, University of Washington, 2003).

Composers Through Each Historical Period," provides a valuable model for conceiving and framing musical analyses of Tanaka's pedagogical piano works.[15]

A handful of primary sources on Tanaka and her compositional output exist. Of particular interest is an interview with the composer conducted over email with Aira Yoshioka.[16] Additionally, a few reviews have been written on selected performances of her works, as well as program notes written by the composer. However, these sources are not specific to her piano works; rather, they discuss her music in other genres, including works for violin and orchestra.

Biographical accounts on Tanaka are also limited. Although her biography is accessible through a variety of domains, including published scores, selected articles, dissertations, and various websites, these sources all contain nearly the same information. The accounts from these sources tend to be based on the biography published in *Children of Light*. However, this collection was published in 1999, and Tanaka continues to actively compose through the present. Therefore, the information from this biography is twenty-five years old and no longer up-to-date. The most current biographical record is found on the website of Gustavus Adolphus College.[17] In October 2022, Tanaka visited the college to give a lecture and guest artist recital, and her biography is featured in the event announcement. Even with this updated account, the need for a more thorough and detailed discussion of her life and works is needed.

When studying Karen Tanaka's music, it is important to first understand her place as a Japanese composer within a broad historical and cultural context. Luciana Galliano's book

[15] Heidi Astle Worsham, "A Teacher's Guide to Diverse Piano Repertoire: An Annotated Bibliography of Intermediate Level Repertoire by Historically Underrepresented Composers Through Each Historical Period" (DMA document, The University of Iowa, 2022).

[16] Aira Yoshioka, "Resonating Culture: Sounds of Japan in the Music of Maki Ishii, Karen Tanaka and Toshio Hosokawa" (DMA document, The Juilliard School, 2002), 123-127.

[17] Gustavus Adolphus College, "Music for Film and Electronic Media."

Yōgaku: Japanese Music in the Twentieth Century offers invaluable insight in this regard.[18] The author traces the history of Western music in Japan since its official inception in 1869, when thirty Japanese men traveled to Yokohama to study military music with John William Fenton, the director of Britain's military band.[19] Although Western music was initially introduced for pragmatic purposes in Japan, including military music, music in schools, and music for ceremonial events, it was not until 1883 that an aesthetic interest in Western music began to take hold, when the German composer Franz Eckert (1852–1916) was invited to serve as the music advisor for the Japanese Ministry of Education and teach at the Ueno School of Music.[20] Relevant to the current study is Galliano's discussion of the post-World War II era, specifically her mention of Akira Miyoshi, with whom Tanaka studied composition during her years in Japan.

After establishing a broad understanding of Western music in Japan, it is important to place Tanaka within the context of other contemporary Japanese composers. Chapter 8 of Galliano's book offers a detailed discussion of this topic. Several composers who precede Tanaka by one generation are introduced, including Matsudaira, Yuasa, Takemitsu, Ishii, and Ichiyanagi.[21] In the final portion of the chapter, Galliano positions Tanaka as one of several Japanese composers of the next generation. This discussion provides a deeper understanding of how Tanaka's compositional style and characteristics compare to her Japanese contemporaries.

It is also critical to examine Tanaka's identity as a Japanese composer who has associations with both the East and West. In Yoshioka's 2002 dissertation "Resonating Culture:

[18] Luciana Galliano, *Yōgaku: Japanese Music in the Twentieth Century*, trans. Martin Mayes (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002).

[19] Ibid, 28.

[20] Ibid, 39.

[21] Ibid, 259.

Sounds of Japan in the Music of Maki Ishii, Karen Tanaka and Toshio Hosokawa," the author presents studies of three composers whose musical training began in Japan and continued in the West.[22] The first chapter provides valuable information on the history and genesis of Western music in Japan, emphasizing the contributions of Toru Takemitsu (1930–1996) and Toshiro Mayuzumi (1929–1997). These two composers are credited specifically with bringing contemporary Western music to Japan following the aftermath of World War II. Yoshioka's dissertation explores the ways in which Japanese aesthetics and sensibility are preserved in the works of Japanese composers who received significant musical training in the West. Yoshioka discusses the Japanese aesthetics of *ma* (translation: "gap, space, or pause"), timelessness, and stretched time as they relate to the music of Ishii, Tanaka, and Hosokawa. The instrumentation choices of these composers are also examined, including Ishii's scoring of traditional Japanese instruments within a Western orchestral setting and Tanaka's incorporation of specific playing techniques on Western instruments to imitate traditional Japanese instruments. The inclusion of Tanaka as one of three central composers in this study is valuable, particularly because it provides the opportunity to place her into a larger context of contemporary Japanese composers.

Another important element in establishing Tanaka's compositional identity is her significance among other contemporary Asian women composers. Amber Yiu-Hsuan Liao's 2019 article "Diversifying Concert Programming: Introducing Works for Solo Piano by Asian Female Composers" features three women who were raised in the East and later studied and established careers in the West.[23] The featured composers are Chen Yi, Unsuk Chin, and Karen Tanaka, whose incorporation of musical elements from their native cultures span a wide range.

[22] Yoshioka, "Resonating Culture," Abstract.

[23] Amber Yiu-Hsuan Liao, "Diversifying Concert Programming: Introducing Works for Solo Piano by Asian Female," *Piano Magazine* 11, no. 4 (Autumn 2019): 36–38.

Chen Yi consciously incorporates Chinese folk tunes and influences from Beijing opera and Chinese percussion music into her works, while Unsuk Chin deliberately composes in a globally-minded way, without any specific elements from her Korean culture. Chin asserts, "'There is no border between all kinds of instruments or all kinds of forms of music. For me, music is just music, and instruments are just instruments.'"[24] Interestingly, Tanaka's incorporation of Japanese culture in her music falls somewhere in between. In an email interview with Yoshioka, Tanaka admits that integrating Japanese musical elements into her compositions is not a conscious part of her process.[25] However, she agrees that her music has a "Japanese sensibility, including such qualities as simplicity, sensuousness, detailed craftmanship, and sense of silence."[26]

While an in-depth discussion of Tanaka's compositional style will be presented in Chapter Two, the following select sources provide a useful introduction to understanding her style. The article "Japanese Composers of the Post-Takemitsu Generation," which discusses composers such as Nishimura, Hosokawa, and Matsudaira, provides a concise introduction to the evolution of Tanaka's style, outlining her early modernist years at the Institute for Research and Coordination in Acoustics/Music (IRCAM), her shift towards minimalism, and ultimately, neo-romanticism.[27] Additionally, the liner notes from the album *Invisible Curve* address a variety of Tanaka's compositional influences. These include the Japanese elements of timelessness, stretched time, and deformed space; her study of spectral music with Tristan Murail in Paris; and her formative years interning at IRCAM. Because the research at IRCAM focuses on the study of

[24] "Unsuk Chin on Unsuk Chin," Boosey & Hawkes, accessed October 12, 2023, http://www.boosey.com/podcast/Unsuk-Chin-on-Unsuk-Chin/100716.

[25] Liao, "Diversifying Concert Programming," 36–38.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Long, "Japanese Composers," 21.

acoustics and sound design, it has been claimed that its lineage can be traced back to Olivier Messiaen and Claude Debussy, both of whom valued these concepts in their own compositional pursuits.[28] Interestingly, these composers were influenced by music from Asia, and as an emerging composer, Tanaka studied French Impressionism extensively with Akira Miyoshi in Japan.[29] The mutual and overlapping interest of these composers in pursuing the other's musical culture is significant.

One aspect of Tanaka's compositional style that receives notable attention is her tendency towards minimalism. While the earliest literature on minimalism emphasizes a traditional approach and formal aesthetics, Robert Fink's book *Repeating Ourselves: American Minimal Music as Cultural Practice* offers a revisionist approach to minimalism.[30] The author draws several parallels between minimalism, popular music, and mass culture. Of particular interest is the final chapter, "'I Did This Exercise 100,000 Times': Zen, Minimalism, and the Suzuki Method." The parallels drawn between the characteristic repetitive practice of the Suzuki Method with minimalism are not only logical, but also relevant to the current project in the way they relate to Zen Buddhism and Japanese culture, including the aesthetics of *ma* and timelessness.

In terms of research that specifically addresses Tanaka's relationship to minimalism, Nomura's dissertation "An Examination of Karen Tanaka's Approach to Minimalism: Water Dance and Techno Etudes" is the most relevant to her piano works. Following a discussion of minimalism and postminimalism, the author analyzes two of Tanaka's most minimalist piano

[28] Marilyn Bliss, liner notes for Chen Yi and Karen Tanaka, *Invisible Curve,* The Azure Ensemble, New World Records 80683-2, 2008, CD.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Robert Fink, *Repeating Ourselves: American Minimal Music as Cultural Practice* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

works: *Water Dance* (2008), a three-movement work, and the first set of *Techno Etudes* (2000), consisting of three etudes. Of particular interest is the author's discussion of Tanaka's utilization and manipulation of minimalist fundamentals to create a compositional voice that is distinctively her own. While Tanaka certainly makes use of repetitive rhythmic and melodic material in these pieces, Nomura explains that the composer breaks this repetition by incorporating irregular rhythmic groupings, uneven phrase lengths, and unpredictable accents within the overall texture that propels the pieces forward.[31]

Tanaka's use of natural and environmental themes in her compositional output is fundamental to her style. The most valuable source addressing this topic is Chih-Suei Shaw's 2016 dissertation "Discourses of Identity in Contemporary East Asian Music: Chen Yi, Unsuk Chin and Karen Tanaka." In the third chapter, the author presents Tanaka's ecomusicological approach to composition as "non-cultural,"[32] asserting that there is no explicit Japanese influence in her music. Rather, Shaw cites Tanaka's training in spectral music as the primary contributing factor to her style. She highlights several pieces from *Children of Light* to support this point, including "Sea Turtle," "Mountain Gorilla," and "Red-Faced Parrot." Shaw argues that through Tanaka's global and observational approach to depicting these endangered animals, her reverence for nature is unified with her spectral technique of composition. Although spectral music has certainly influenced Tanaka's compositional voice, this is not consistently the single dominating factor that defines all of her compositions.

The most pedagogically-relevant source is Rebecca Billock's 2003 dissertation "Selected Intermediate Piano Pieces by Seven Women of the Twentieth Century: Marion Bauer, Germaine

[31] Nomura, "An Examination of Karen Tanaka's Approach to Minimalism," 22.

[32] Chih-Suei Shaw, "Towards an Ecological Identity: Nature and Environmental Consciousness in Karen Tanaka's Music," in "Discourses of Identity in Contemporary East Asian Music: Chen Yi, Unsuk Chin and Karen Tanaka" (PhD diss., University of Oxford, 2016), 175–253.

Tailleferre, Ruth Crawford Seeger, Sofia Gubaidulina, Emma Lou Diemer, Chen Yi, and Karen Tanaka."[33] It features a chapter that highlights Tanaka's collection *Children of Light,* including the four pieces "Blue Planet," "Coral Reef," "Green Paradise," and "Mountain Gorilla." The discussion of each piece includes brief commentary on compositional elements, pedagogical challenges, and a stylistic connection to Tanaka's standard solo piano literature. While this source does include a list of pieces in progressive order of difficulty, the pieces are not assigned specific numerical levels. To promote practical use of this collection in piano teaching studios, a numerically-leveled listing of all twenty-five pieces in *Children of Light* is provided in Appendix C of the current study.

Billock's study also includes a list of piano works composed by Tanaka.[34] Each listing includes a title, date of composition, designation of an individual work or full collection, performance duration, and publisher information. Standard and pedagogical piano repertoire are listed separately and are arranged in chronological order by date of composition. While this list of Tanaka's piano works is valuable, it only includes works composed through 2003, the year in which Billock's dissertation was completed. The list of Tanaka's piano works in Nomura's 2017 dissertation is more current, as it includes the majority of her output up to 2016.[35] However, this list is also out of date. Tanaka continues to actively compose and has published additional piano works since the completion of Nomura's dissertation. The current study will augment Nomura's list of Tanaka's piano works with the addition of the following pieces: "Masquerade" (2013), "Who Stole the Tarts?" (2016), *Love in the Wind* (2017), *Techno Etudes II* (2020), "Rose Crystal" (2022), and "Sensation" (2022).

[33] Billock, "Selected Intermediate Piano Pieces."

[34] Ibid, 88–90.

[35] Nomura, "An Examination of Karen Tanaka's Approach to Minimalism," 52.

Chapter Two will offer a detailed account of Karen Tanaka as a composer. This consists of an overview of her compositional output in all musical genres, an in-depth discussion of her compositional style, which includes modernism, minimalism, neo-romanticism, French impressionism, and Japanese aesthetic influences, a chronological survey of her standard and pedagogical piano works, and an introduction to her pedagogical piano collection *Children of Light* (1999).

Chapter Two: Tanaka as Composer

Overview of Tanaka's Compositional Output

Karen Tanaka has composed extensively for orchestra, chamber music, piano and harpsichord, solo instruments, choir, and electroacoustics. Her orchestral works include two piano concerti *Anamorphose* (1986) and *Hommage en cristal* (1991); the cello concerto *Urban Prayer* (2004); the triple concerto *Guardian Angel* (2000) for clarinet, harp, and percussion; as well as several smaller-scale orchestral works including *Prismes* (1984), *Initium* (1993) for orchestra and electronics, *Wave Mechanics* (1994), *Echo Canyon* (1995), *Departure* (2000), *Lost Sanctuary* (2002), *Rose Absolute* (2002), and *Water of Life* (2013). Celebrated as an "exceptionally versatile composer,"[36] Tanaka has also composed orchestral music outside of the traditional concert music genre. She was the lead orchestrator for the BBC television series *Planet Earth II* (2016) and composed music for several short films and animations, including *Rise of the Guardians* (2012), *The Light at Walden* (2014), the Oscar-nominated *Sister* (2018), and *The Old Young Crow* (2023).

Tanaka's chamber music works include two string quartets, *Metal Strings* (1996) and *At the Grave of Beethoven* (1999); several works for solo instruments and piano, including *Always in My Heart* (1999) for clarinet and piano, *Ocean* (2003) for violin and piano, *Silent Ocean* (2005) for trumpet and piano, *Enchanted Forest* (2013) for horn and piano, and *Once Upon a Time* (2021) for flute and piano; *Polarization* (1994) for two percussionists; *Shibuya Tokyo* (2009) for two violins; *Wind Whisperer* (2019) for flute, viola, and harp; and various pieces for

[36] "Faculty and Staff: Karen Tanaka," CalArts School of Music, accessed November 12, 2022, https://music.calarts.edu/faculty-and-staff/karen-tanaka.

mixed ensembles of five to eight players, including *Invisible Curve* (1996), *Frozen Horizon* (1998), *Water and Stone* (1999), *Dreamscape* (2001), and *Holland Park Avenue Study* (2002).

Two unaccompanied solo instrumental works exist in Tanaka's output, including *Lilas* (1988) for cello and *Tales of Trees* (2003) for marimba. The rest of her works for solo instruments are coupled with electronics. These titles include *Wave Mechanics II* (1994) for violin and electronics; *Metallic Crystal* (1995) for metallic percussion and electronics; *Night Bird* (1996) for alto saxophone and electronics; *The Song of Songs* (1996) for cello and electronics; *Aube* (2020) for cello, narration, and electronics; and *L'Éternité* (2021) for violin and electronics. In addition, Tanaka has composed three entirely electroacoustic works: *Celestial Harmonics* (1997), *Inuit Voices* (1997), and *Questions of Nature* (1998).

A more recent addition to Tanaka's oeuvre is her choral music. She composed all works in this genre between 2009 and 2018, and the majority emphasize sacred themes. Titles include *God is Love as Love is God* (2009), *God Loves Us All* (2009), *Rise Up Hallelu* (2009), *Wait for the Lord* (2009), *Sleep My Child* (2012), and *Sleep Deeply* (2018).

The piano works of Tanaka comprise her largest and longest-spanning genre of composition. Publication dates range from 1988 to 2022, and her contributions to both the standard and pedagogical solo piano repertoire are significant.[37] Tanaka's standard solo repertoire consists of ten publications, which in total are made up of sixteen individual movements and pieces. Her pedagogical repertoire consists of seven publications, made up of eighty-four individual movements and pieces. A chronological survey of Tanaka's standard and pedagogical solo piano works is discussed in detail at the conclusion of this chapter, and a complete list of her piano works is included in Appendix A.

[37] In the current study, pedagogical solo piano repertoire is defined as pieces classified as Levels 1–10 in Jane Magrath's leveling system, and standard solo repertoire is defined as works exceeding Level 10.

Overview of Tanaka's Compositional Style

The compositional style of Karen Tanaka is diverse and multi-faceted. It is not only influenced by her formal compositional studies with Akira Miyoshi, Tristan Murail, and Luciano Berio, but also by her Japanese culture and upbringing. The sound of her music is described as "delicate and emotive, beautifully crafted, showing a refined ear for both detail and large, organic shapes."[38] While Tanaka's choices of harmony are consonant, her music can rarely be described as tonal.[39] To date, her compositional style has evolved from modernism, to minimalism, and eventually neo-romanticism. Additional elements of her style permeate all of these compositional phases, including French impressionism and the Japanese aesthetic influences of *ma*, timelessness, stretched time, and honoring nature. The stylistic elements of modernism, minimalism, neo-romanticism, French impressionism, and Japanese aesthetic influences are outlined in the following sections.

I. Modernism

Tanaka's earliest compositional phase is represented by modernism. When she moved to Paris in 1986, Tanaka was introduced to spectral music by her teacher and mentor Tristan Murail, one of the founders of this approach. Based in Paris since its inception in the early 1970s, spectral music is a modernist school of composition that focuses on the acoustic and psychoacoustic properties of sound.[40] Through advancements in technology, science, and access

[38] Stephen Montague, "Karen Tanaka," *Grove Music Online* (2001): 1, https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.48591.

[39] Ibid.

[40] James Donaldson, "Melody on the Threshold of Spectral Music," *Music Theory Online* 21, Part 2 (2021): 1, https://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.21.27.2/mto.21.27.2.donaldson.php.

to microphones, it became possible to research music through the physics of sound.[41] In addition to spectral music, Tanaka also experienced other modernist influences during her time as an intern at the Institute for Research and Coordination in Acoustics/Music (IRCAM) from 1986 through 1989. This internship provided her the opportunity to program audio and electroacoustic music, as well as train visiting composers to use IRCAM's technology as a tool for composition. These experiences, which were notably Tanaka's first musical impressions upon moving to the Western world, were deeply influential to the emergence of her own compositional voice.

The three earliest of Tanaka's piano works demonstrate her modernist style particularly well. *Anamorphose* (1986), her first piano concerto and first major piano work, features consistently changing beats per measure that are notated as single large numbers rather than as traditional time signatures. Examples include "5" (for the meter 5/4) and "6" (for the meter 6/4). Tanaka also incorporates unconventional meters, such as "4.5" (for the meter 4.5/4) and "6.5" (for the meter 6.5/4). Additionally, she utilizes several instrumental playing techniques that are characteristic of avant-garde music, such as using the bow of the double bass to play the harp and muting strings on the piano with the fingers while playing the corresponding keys with the other hand. Tanaka's first solo piano work, "Crystalline" (1988), contains bar lines but no time signature. To add further ambiguity, the measures contain variable numbers of beats. Durations are specified by the number of seconds (e.g., 7"), very precise tempo changes occur throughout, and several instances of upwards of ten dynamic markings are notated within a single measure. Her second piano concerto, *Hommage en cristal* (1991), often features a different dynamic marking for each pitch, specific bowing instructions for string instruments (e.g., bouncing the

[41] Gérard Grisey and Joshua Fineberg, "Did You Say Spectral?," *Contemporary Music Review* 19, Part 3 (2000): 1, https://doi.org/10.1080/07494460000640311.

bow), and an unmetered cadenza in which the durations of sustained notes are also specified by the number of seconds.

II. Minimalism

One aspect of Tanaka's compositional style that receives notable attention is her tendency towards minimalism. While this artistic movement has been narrowly defined as repetitive music that continually restates melodic or rhythmic patterns, more specific elements of a traditional approach to minimalism include harmonic stasis, repetition with gradual or terraced transformations, drones, additive process, phase-shifting, lack of rhythmic differentiation, and a sense of timelessness.[42]

It is also important to acknowledge a more revisionist approach to minimalism, in which popular music and mass culture have been influential to its evolution. Particularly relevant to Tanaka is the parallels that Robert Fink draws between minimalism and the highly repetitive practice routines of the Suzuki method.[43] This method was established by esteemed Japanese violinist and pedagogue Shinichi Suzuki. Fink argues that the meditative and repetitive practices of Zen Buddhism both informed his philosophy of this teaching method and developed a practice routine that in of itself is minimalistic. Considering her Japanese heritage and upbringing, Tanaka's cultural exposure to Zen Buddhism could also be a contributing factor to her minimalistic style.

By the mid-1990s, Tanaka began to incorporate elements of minimalism in her compositional works. Some selections from her pedagogical piano collections *The Zoo in the Sky*

[42] Keith Potter, Kyle Gann, and Pwyll ap Siôn, *The Ashgate Research Companion to Minimalist and Postminimal Music* (Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013), 4–5.

[43] Fink, *Repeating Ourselves*, 208–235.

(1995) and *Children of Light* (1999) feature characteristics of minimalism. These most commonly include harmonic stasis, melodic and rhythmic repetitions with gradual transformations, and a sense of timelessness. Tanaka's minimalistic style is most definitively identified, however, in her standard solo piano works *Techno Etudes I* and *II* (2000, 2020) and *Water Dance* (2008). These sets of pieces are strikingly minimalistic and generate highly distinctive characters. The *Techno Etudes* produce a motoric sense of motion with a driving pulse, and *Water Dance* evokes the perpetual movement of water to create a shimmering effect. While Tanaka certainly makes use of repetitive rhythmic and melodic material, she breaks this repetition by incorporating irregular rhythmic groupings, uneven phrase lengths, and unpredictable accents within the overall texture that propels the pieces forward.[44] These examples demonstrate ways in which Tanaka utilizes and manipulates minimalist fundamentals to produce a compositional voice that is distinctively her own.

III. Neo-Romanticism

While the integration of neo-romanticism in Tanaka's works has been present for decades, her attraction to this style has grown organically over time. The earliest occurrences of Tanaka's neo-romantic elements are evident in her pedagogical piano music. These instances date back to the 1990s, as several pieces in the collections *The Zoo in the Sky* (1995) and *Children of Light* (1999) contain pieces with emotive harmonies and refined lyricism. These are often the same pieces that feature the clearly defined, traditional forms of neo-romanticism, something that is not particularly common in Tanaka's music. This trend continues with the pedagogical piano pieces "Lavender Field" (2000) and "Northern Lights" (2002), followed by

[44] Nomura, "An Examination of Karen Tanaka's Approach to Minimalism," 22.

the collections *Our Planet Earth* (2011) and *Love in the Wind* (2017). It is important to note that the neo-romantic style is by no means the only stylistic influence in these works, nor are elements of this style presented in every piece in these collections. Rather, it represents a consistent trend that can be traced among her pedagogical oeuvre.

Most recently, Tanaka's incorporation of neo-romantic elements has gained prominence in her two newest standard solo piano works. The freestanding piece "Rose Crystal" (2022) features lush harmonies and a rippling, arpeggiated accompaniment pattern. Its inspiration comes from the rose garden scene in the 1959 film *A Summer Place.* Tanaka transforms the melodic motifs from this scene, composed by Max Steiner, into long, lyrical melodic lines that are continually passed between the hands. Rubato is incorporated freely and generously, in addition to expressive characteristics. "Sensation" (2022), another freestanding piece, also contains neo-romantic elements. One example is the passages of sixteenth notes in which the right hand plays multiple layers simultaneously. These layers include long, melodic lines and portions of the active, arpeggiated accompaniment. Similarly to "Rose Crystal" (2022), Tanaka notates a considerable amount of expressive detail in the score, including fluctuations in tempo (e.g., *poco rubato, ritardando, accelerando, a tempo*), tempo changes, dynamic variety, and precise markings for pedaling.[45] This piece was inspired by the poem *Sensation*, written by Arthur Rimbaud at the age of fifteen. Tanaka describes the poem as evoking "sensuous and fresh images of summer evenings, his dream of escaping into nature, a sense of freedom and infinite love, and his ardent desire to journey as a bohemian to places he has never seen."[46] In both the cases of "Rose Crystal" (2022) and "Sensation" (2022), Tanaka used inspirations from other art forms to compose these pieces, which is also a characteristic of romantic music.

[45] Karen Tanaka, *Sensation* (New York: Project Schott New York, 2022).
[46] Ibid, Composer's Note.

IV. French Impressionism

French impressionism, in addition to the Japanese aesthetic influences that will be discussed in the following section, are not compositional phases for the composer. Rather, they function as themes that recur throughout all phases of Tanaka's compositional style. French impressionism has been influencing Tanaka's music as far back as the 1980s, during her earliest years as a composer. It was during this time that she studied with Akira Miyoshi at the Toho Gakuen School of Music in Tokyo.

Miyoshi, whom Tanaka remembers with deep gratitude and affection, was profoundly influenced by French culture and style. During his undergraduate years, Miyoshi studied French literature at Tokyo University, in addition to taking composition lessons with Tomojiro Ikenouchi and Raymond Gallois-Montbrun.[47] Ikenouchi was the first Japanese student to enroll at the Paris Conservatory. He later returned to Japan, promoting the French style to many aspiring Japanese student-composers, including Miyoshi. The French composer Gallois-Montbrun was another major influence for Miyoshi. This Frenchman moved to Japan to teach composition from 1952 to 1954, and it was during his studies with Gallois-Montbrun that Miyoshi won first prize in the Mainichi Competition with his *Sonata for Clarinet, Bassoon, and Piano*.[48]

In 1955, Miyoshi studied abroad as a foreign exchange student at the Paris Conservatory, just as Ikenouchi had done. He studied there for two and a half years before returning to Tokyo to complete his degree in French literature. As he became a well-respected composer and teacher

[47] Naomi Noro Brown, "Akira Miyoshi's Didactic Works for Solo Piano" (DMA document, Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College, 1994), 8.

[48] Ibid, 9.

in Japan, Miyoshi imparted his knowledge and fondness of the French style to his students, including the young Karen Tanaka.

From the beginning of her compositional career to the present, elements of French impressionism are identifiable in Tanaka's music. A substantial number of her piano works feature a liberal use of the sustain pedal, often with more than one harmony being sustained under the same pedal marking. This creates a sense of blur, which is highly characteristic of French impressionism. Tanaka's music is often atmospheric, and although most of her works do contain melodic content, the greater goal is to communicate a particular aura, emotion, or depiction of a scene or landscape through her music.

One of the most fundamental components of Tanaka's style is the high value she places on tone color and production. This is particularly evident in her title "Prisms in the Forest"[49] and her expression markings *Colorfully,*[50] *Refreshingly, with a transparent sound,*[51] and *Softly, with a mystic light*.[52] Temporal fluidity is also a common characteristic in her works. Between changing meters, irregular meters, and a considerable amount of rubato, Tanaka's music has a tendency to avoid a strong rhythmic and metric pulse. These characteristics in her music demonstrate influences of French impressionism, particularly in regards to her studies with Miyoshi and her own training that she completed in Paris with Tristan Murail.

[49] Karen Tanaka, *Children of Light* (London: Chester Music, 1999), 34.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid, 46.
[52] Ibid, 60.

V. Japanese Influences

Tanaka's interest and devotion to nature is a theme that is infused into the majority of her compositional output. Titles such as *Lavender Field, Questions of Nature, The Zoo in the Sky, Water and Stone, Tales of Trees, Water Dance,* and *Ocean* support this claim.[53] When considering the origins of Tanaka's reverence for nature, the substantiality of this theme suggests an overarching influence that reaches beyond her personal interests. One argument suggests that Shinto, the religion associated most closely with the Japanese people, could be a contributing factor. In Shinto, a reverence for nature is a fundamental tenet that has been upheld for centuries. Although Tanaka was not raised exclusively in the Shinto faith, Thomas Kasulis, a scholar on Japanese thought and religion, explains that elements of this religion are embedded into everyday Japanese life in both subconscious and conscious ways.[54] Because Shinto is practiced almost exclusively in Japan, Kasulis argues that its influence as both an overarching spirituality and intentional tradition makes it a vital, permeable presence in Japanese life. Because of Tanaka's upbringing in Tokyo, her experience and exposure to Shinto themes is apparent.

Additional Japanese influences that are significant in Tanaka's works include *ma,* timelessness, and stretched time. In English, the term *ma* translates to "gap, space, or pause," referring to the presence of empty space within the context of Japanese arts and culture. The premise of *ma* is that empty space holds equal importance to the artwork itself. In the case of music, *ma* is commonly perceived through inserting rests and silences between musical ideas. This is a compositional technique that Tanaka utilizes often in her works. The concept of timelessness is a characteristic aesthetic of Zen Buddhism, a religion common in Japanese

[53] "Karen Tanaka: Biography," European American Music Distributors Company, accessed October 12, 2022, https://www.eamdc.com/psny/composers/karen-tanaka/biography/.

[54] Thomas P. Kasulis, *Shinto: The Way Home* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 38, http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt6wr417.

culture. Timelessness is achieved musically through melodic ostinati, irregular meters, and meter changes, all of which Tanaka incorporates regularly in her compositions. A subset of timelessness is the concept of stretched time. Tanaka cultivates stretched time by using the sustain pedal to prolong previously played pitches during beats or measures of rest. She uses this compositional technique regularly, such as in the selection "Red-Faced Parrot" in the collection *Children of Light*.[55] With her flexible use of meter, frequent inclusion of rests, and often a de-emphasis of downbeats, Tanaka's treatment of time is one of the most Eastern-influenced aspects of her compositional style. This stands in contrast to the Western concept of time, which emphasizes a definitive meter, regular phrase units, and a distinct sense of beginning, middle, and end.

The following section provides a survey of Tanaka's solo piano works and includes both standard and pedagogical literature. As works are presented in chronological order, this section shifts between standard and pedagogical repertoire regularly. For clarity, the discussion of each piece is prefaced with a designation of standard or pedagogical literature.

Chronological Survey of Tanaka's Solo Piano Music

Karen Tanaka's earliest standard solo piano work, "Crystalline," was completed in 1988. This is the first piece in which Tanaka uses the image of crystals as the subject of composition, as the crystal theme recurs consistently throughout her solo piano works. Her intention for "Crystalline" and subsequent crystal-themed works is to "project the image of crystal onto sound."[56] Composed two years after moving to Paris to study with Murail, "Crystalline" features

[55] Karen Tanaka, *Children of Light* (London: Chester Music, 1999), 48.

[56] "Crystalline (1988)," Wise Music Classical, accessed October 23, 2023, https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/11273/Crystalline--Karen-Tanaka/.

alternations in sound settings, polyrhythms, and broken-chord and cluster figures that can be traced back to Messiaen.[57] This work arguably utilizes Tanaka's most modernist style of writing. Although the score includes bar lines, it lacks a time signature. Durations of note values alternate between a specified number of seconds (e.g., *4"*) and metronome markings that designate the number of beats per minute (e.g., ♩ = 54). Most of the piece is notated in three and four staves, and dissonant harmonies abound. An incredible amount of dynamic detail is included, with almost every note receiving a specific dynamic marking. In the composer's note prefacing the score, Tanaka states that "a glassy, solid sound is required: like a cold, crystal sound sculpture."[58]

Commissioned by Edition Kawai and completed in 1995, *The Zoo in the Sky* is Tanaka's earliest pedagogical piano collection.[59] Comprised of twenty pieces, the theme is constellations and the night sky. Most titles are named after animals such as "Rabbit" and "Swan," as well as fictitious animals including "Unicorn" and "Pegasus." Each piece is prefaced with brief commentary and teaching suggestions written by Tanaka. Through the study of these pieces, the composer desires for children to "fully develop their dreams for space and stars, their affection for animals, and also express their originality and imagination."[60] Pieces range from Levels 2 through 9 and are published in increasing level of difficulty. Many selections are intended as studies to develop technical skills, including broken chords, trills, repeated notes, chromatic scales, and staccato and legato articulation. In her commentary, Tanaka also instructs teachers to

[57] Signe Bakke, liner notes for Karen Tanaka, *Crystalline: Piano Music by Karen Tanaka*, Signe Bakke, 2L (Lindberg Lyd) 2L74, 2011, CD.

[58] Karen Tanaka, "Composer's Note," in *Crystalline* (London: Chester Music, 1988).

[59] Karen Tanaka, *The Zoo in the Sky* (Tokyo: Edition Kawai, 1996).

[60] Ibid, Preface.

emphasize with students the changes in timbre and harmonic color so that they will develop into thoughtful and intuitive musicians over time.

The next of Tanaka's crystal-themed standard solo piano works is "Crystalline II," completed in 1996.[61] Similar to its predecessor "Crystalline," this piece explores the subtleties of the sound universe, but in a more linear and cohesive way. The pianist Signe Bakke describes it as having "an inner flow that carries the music forward."[62] Both hands spend nearly the entire piece playing in the treble clef and reading extended ledger lines. There are also periods of repetitive thirty-second-note passages that reflect the composer's transition to minimalistic writing. Tanaka has admitted that her own voice can be more clearly discerned in "Crystalline II" (1996) than in the original work "Crystalline" (1988).[63]

In 1999, Tanaka completed her second pedagogical piano collection, *Children of Light.*[64] Containing twenty-five pieces ranging from Levels 3 through 8, the theme of this collection is wild animals in danger and environmental concerns. The titles are named primarily after endangered animals, such as "Sea Turtle," "Red-Faced Parrot," and "Wild Water Buffalo." Tanaka explains that the animals in this collection were selected from the *1996 IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals.*[65] Several compositional trends can be traced throughout the collection, including the use of irregular meters, ostinato accompaniments, tone clusters, and surprising harmonic shifts. An expansive variety of characters, tempi, styles, and difficulty levels make *Children of Light* a particularly versatile intermediate piano collection. The twenty-five pieces in this collection are examined in depth in Chapters Three through Six of this current document.

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[61] Karen Tanaka, *Crystalline II* (London: Chester Music, 1996).

[62] Signe Bakke, liner notes for Karen Tanaka, *Crystalline: Piano Music by Karen Tanaka*, Signe Bakke, 2L (Lindberg Lyd) 2L74, 2011, CD.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Karen Tanaka, *Children of Light* (London: Chester Music, 1999).

[65] Ibid, Preface.

Tanaka's most prolific year of piano composition was 2000. Her first standard solo piano work from this year is "Crystalline III," the last of three pieces bearing this title.[66] It was commissioned by Soundstreams Canada and premiered by Eve Egoyan at the Glenn Gould Studio in Toronto in May 2000. While Tanaka's intention for her crystal-themed works is maintained in this piece, which includes a glassy and solid playing technique, the composer also states that "Crystalline III" has "become more joyful and more rapidly fluttering in space" than the previous two works.[67] With its regularly repeating pitch and rhythmic patterns, it is considerably more minimalistic than its predecessors. Additionally, the lack of rests in "Crystalline III" creates a deficit of empty space, which is integral to "Crystalline I" and "Crystalline II." These changes to Tanaka's compositional approach reflect her increasing shift toward minimalism at this point in her career.

The year 2000 also marked the completion of Tanaka's first set of *Techno Etudes.* These three standard solo pieces were commissioned by Dutch-Japanese pianist Tomoko Mukaiyama, who had originally requested that Tanaka compose a piece for piano to synchronize with pre-recorded techno music on tape. However, it was later decided that a solo piano work without a pre-recorded tape would allow for a more substantial project. The retention of a high-energy and machine-like drive was integral to Tanaka's conception of these pieces, and she asserts that this set can be summarized in three words: "techno, rhythm, and speed."[68] The *Techno Etudes* feature some of her most minimalistic writing. In the first etude, repeat signs are notated every one to three measures, and designations for the number of times to repeat range from two to eleven times. While melodic and rhythmic ostinati prevail in this set, resulting in a hypnotic experience

[66] Karen Tanaka, *Crystalline III* (London: Chester Music, 2000).
[67] Wise Music Classical, "Crystalline III (2000)."
[68] Ibid.

for the listener, Tanaka generates aural interest with tiny accentuations, subtly altered pitch patterns, and frequent use of irregular and constantly changing meters.

By the turn of the millennium, Tanaka's prominence as a composer became increasingly evident. She began to receive commissions from the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABSRM) *Spectrum* series, a pedagogical anthology of contemporary piano music compiled by Thalia Myers. Tanaka's first two pedagogical contributions to this series include "Lavender Field" (2000)[69] and "Northern Lights" (2002).[70,71] Both pieces feature an ostinato accompaniment in the right hand and melodic material in the left hand. "Lavender Field" is primarily in 6/8 time with a brief departure to 9/8, while "Northern Lights" maintains the irregular meter of 5/8 throughout. In terms of leveling, "Lavender Field" is the more difficult selection of the two and is classified as a Level 6–7 piece. It features the left hand frequently playing both below and above the right hand, which requires consistent hand crossing. Accidentals are also prevalent, and sophisticated pedaling is necessary to provide seamlessness between the subtle harmonic shifts. "Northern Lights" is classified as a Level 4 piece, featuring a stable ostinato accompaniment and melodic material with open fifths. Accidentals are also included in this selection, but they are more easily recognizable, as they always form the interval of a perfect fifth. This piece is brief in length but can serve as an accessible introduction to the composer's style of writing. "Lavender Field" and "Northern Lights" are the last two pieces that Tanaka composed in France before moving to the United States in 2005.

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[69] Thalia Myers, *Spectrum 3: An International Collection of 25 Pieces for Solo Piano* (London: ABRSM Publishing Ltd., 2001).

[70] Thalia Myers, *Spectrum 4: An International Collection of 66 Miniatures for Solo Piano* (London: ABRSM Publishing Ltd., 2005).

[71] It is important to note that Tanaka composed multiple pieces bearing the title *Northern Lights.* The first is a selection from the collection *Children of Light* (1999), and the second is a freestanding piece composed for the ABRSM Spectrum series (2002). The current discussion examines the latter of these pieces.

In contrast to the solid, glassy technique required in the earlier *Crystalline* pieces (1988–2000), Tanaka's standard solo piano composition *Water Dance* (2008) features freely-flowing lines that suggest the need for a warmer tone quality and *leggiero* touch. It is the first standard solo piano work that Tanaka composed in the United States after moving there in 2005. *Water Dance* is comprised of three movements, and the tempo markings indicate the composer's intention to evoke flowing water and the glistening effect that results when light is reflected on water:

I. Very lightly with flow
II. Very softly with shimmering light
III. Very lightly, like a harp[72]

Tanaka describes *Water Dance* as a "joyful dance with pleasant feelings of a pulse, where the water occasionally whispers to us through its shimmering play with light."[73] This work was commissioned by Norwegian pianist Signe Bakke and premiered at the AVGARDE Concert Series for New Music in Bergen, Norway in May 2011.[74]

Between 2011 and 2013, Tanaka made two more contributions to her pedagogical piano works. *Our Planet Earth,* her third teaching collection, was completed in 2011. Comprised of fifteen pieces, it is described by Tanaka as a sequel to *Children of Light* (1999). She explains that *Our Planet Earth* was "written as a message to children to love the beauty of our Planet Earth and the animals, in the hope they develop safe and clean energy and protect the natural environment."[75] In the spirit of environmentalism, all titles refer to this subject and include themes related to the atmosphere, air quality, and solutions for clean energy. Examples of these

[72] Karen Tanaka, *Water Dance* (New York: Project Schott New York, 2011).
[73] Ibid, Composer's Note.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Karen Tanaka, "Preface," in *Our Planet Earth* (Toyko: Kawai, 2011).

titles include “Green,” “Solar Energy,” “Wind Energy,” “Magma,” and “Water of Life.” The pieces range approximately between Levels 6 through 10. In terms of the writing style, this collection features more traditional phrase lengths, accompaniment styles, variety of textures, and fewer minimalistic elements, marking an important shift in the evolution of Tanaka’s compositional style.

The pedagogical piano work “Masquerade” was completed in 2013 as a commission for the ABRSM *Spectrum* Series 5, a contemporary piano collection compiled by Thalia Myers.[76] It is one of the few programmatic works composed by Tanaka. In the footnotes, Tanaka writes, “Imagine a magical and seductive masquerade ball at the Carnival of Venice…[the middle section] should be played very lightly, like a fanciful and flirting butterfly.”[77] The style of writing in this Level 6 piece is rather unconventional for Tanaka. It maintains a consistent 6/8 meter throughout, as well as rhythmically stable accompaniments within each section. The texture is undeniably homophonic, and this piece also models a very clear example of ternary form. The harmonic wandering through the B section provides a contrast to the decisively tonal A sections.

A more recent addition to Tanaka’s standard solo piano series of crystal-themed works is “Blue Crystal” (2014). This freestanding piece was commissioned by pianist Vicki Ray for her project entitled “Exquisite Corpse,” and she premiered the work in Los Angeles in October 2014.[78] Aligning with Tanaka’s previous works inspired by crystals, this piece upholds her intention to project images of crystals in sound and space.[79] However, it departs from the solid,

[76] Thalia Myers, *Spectrum 5: 15 Contemporary Pieces for Solo Piano* (London: ABRSM Publishing Ltd., 2016).

[77] Ibid, 16.

[78] Karen Tanaka, “Composer’s Note,” in *Blue Crystal* (New York: Project Schott New York, 2014).

[79] Ibid.

glassy techniques of "Crystalline I" and "Crystalline II" in favor of a lighter touch with a continuous flow. This marks an important point in the evolution of Tanaka's compositional style. By retaining the subject matter of crystals and combining it with a playing technique reminiscent of *Water Dance*, Tanaka merges old with new, giving "Blue Crystal" a sound and style that is distinctively its own.

One of Tanaka's most unique standard solo piano works is the piece "Who Stole the Tarts?" (2016).[80] Commissioned by Hong Kong pianist Stanley Wong, this piece was inspired by the eleventh chapter of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and composed for the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the children's book.[81] Wong gave the first performance at the Sheung Wan Civic Center Theatre in Hong Kong in May 2016. An exceptionally programmatic work, Tanaka writes detailed descriptions within the score that essentially function as stage directions. Examples include "[The White Rabbit blew the trumpet brilliantly]"[82] and "[The Duchess' cook, the second witness, came in with the pepper box…and everybody started sneezing.]"[83] This reflects her intention to write this piece as if it were music composed for a silent film. Although only four pages in length, the piece undergoes a substantial number of meter and tempo changes, as well as fluctuations between the key signatures of D major and D minor.

Completed in 2017, Tanaka's fourth and most recent pedagogical piano collection is *Love in the Wind*.[84] Consisting of twenty-one pieces, it is dedicated to Akira Miyoshi, Tanaka's beloved composition teacher during her studies at the Toho Gakuen School of Music in Tokyo.

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[80] Karen Tanaka, *Who Stole the Tarts?* (New York: Project Schott New York, 2016).
[81] Ibid, Composer's Note.
[82] Ibid, 1.
[83] Ibid, 3.
[84] Karen Tanaka, *Love in the Wind* (Tokyo: Ongaku No Tomo Sha Corp., 2017).

Its contents are organized by the four seasons of the year: spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Each piece is inspired by a particular memory that Tanaka holds of Miyoshi. In the composer's notes, Tanaka writes brief vignettes for each piece to describe these memories. For example, the piece titled "Christmas Memories" recalls Miyoshi's invitation for Tanaka to join his family for Christmas dinner, and "Black Turtleneck" is a musical depiction of Miyoshi's French-inspired wardrobe, as he studied composition at the Paris Conservatory and "was always elegant and sophisticated in a French way."[85] Tanaka instructs the performer to play this piece *smoothly and stylishly*.[86] In terms of leveling, *Love in the Wind* is the most difficult collection of Tanaka's pedagogical piano works, as the pieces range from Levels 7 through 10. Her characteristic writing can be recognized throughout, including meter changes, lyrical phrasing, and some ostinato accompaniments. Overall, though, the writing in this collection leans more toward Tanaka's newest compositional style that resembles neo-romanticism.

In 2020, Tanaka composed a second set of *Techno Etudes* that she describes as a sequel to the first. The contents of this standard solo piano work strongly resemble the original set, as it is comprised of three pieces in a fast-slow-fast arrangement. However, this second set exudes new and more specific stylistic influences, particularly funk and pop music. In the composer's notes, Tanaka describes the first etude as "funky, groovy, and even psychedelic."[87] This etude is fueled with a distinct rhythmic drive, and a prolonged period of both hands playing in the low register of the piano suggests the revving up of a motor. The second etude bears the subtitle "Color and Emotion Study" and is intended to be played lightly and gently.[88] Tanaka's

[85] Ibid, Composer's Notes.
[86] Ibid, 42.
[87] Karen Tanaka, "Composer's Note," in *Techno Etudes II* (New York: Project Schott New York, 2020).
[88] Ibid, 11.

inspiration for the third etude comes from the hip hop music of the Korean boy band BTS. She explains that bass sounds are boosted and emphasized in this selection.[89]

The most recent contributions to Tanaka's standard piano works are two freestanding pieces, both published in 2022 and considerably neo-romantic in style. "Rose Crystal" was commissioned by Piano Spheres, a Los Angeles-based organization that promotes the composition and performance of new works for piano. The pianist Mari Kawamura premiered the work in Los Angeles in October 2022.[90] It unfolds with an arpeggiated harp-like accompaniment, providing the back drop for this ethereal piece. Tanaka describes "Rose Crystal" as the newest addition to her piano series *Crystalline*, linking it to her many earlier crystal-themed piano works.[91] The single-line melody in this work was inspired by the main theme from the 1959 film *A Summer Place*, composed by Max Steiner. This marks the first time that Tanaka's affinity for film music enters the realm of her piano works. "Sensation," also published in 2022, was influenced by Arthur Rimbaud's poem of the same title.[92] A commission by the Juilliard School for its pre-collegiate division, this piece features some of Tanaka's most characteristic writing: arpeggiated and ostinato-like accompaniments, lyrical single-line melodies, meter changes, and surprising harmonic shifts.

Introduction to *Children of Light* (1999)

Tanaka's intermediate pedagogical piano collection *Children of Light* (1999) contains twenty-five pieces ranging from Levels 3 through 8. The composer wrote this collection as a response to her concern for environmental issues and the planet Earth, with hope that children

[89] Ibid, Composer's Note.
[90] Karen Tanaka, "Composer's Note," in *Rose Crystal* (New York: Project Schott New York, 2022).
[91] Ibid.
[92] Karen Tanaka, "Composer's Note," in *Sensation* (New York: Project Schott New York, 2022).

will be empowered to protect plants, animals, and ecosystems through studying this music. Titles are named primarily after endangered animals, which Tanaka selected from the *1996 IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals.*[93] The pieces are organized into five sections based on the environments in which the animals live: the sea, African jungle, Asian forests, the air, and places where aurora can be observed, such as Norway and the Galapagos Islands.[94] As a result of this organizational system, Tanaka's ordering of pieces is based on geographic location of the selected animals rather than in pedagogical order of increasing level of difficulty. The listing of pieces as they appear in the Table of Contents of *Children of Light* can be accessed in Appendix B. Compositional trends throughout the collection include lyrical melodies, transparent sound, irregular meters, ostinato accompaniments, tone clusters, and surprising harmonic shifts.

The following four chapters will examine each of the twenty-five pieces in *Children of Light.* For pedagogical purposes, the current study will present pieces in order of increasing level of difficulty. Chapter Three examines pieces designated as Levels 3 through 5, Chapter Four examines those designated as Level 6, Chapter Five examines pieces identified as Level 7, and Chapter 7 examines those identified as Level 8. The discussion of each piece features a compositional overview and pedagogical applications, which include strategies for introducing the piece to students, technical and musical considerations, and suggestions for performance.

[93] Ibid, Preface.

[94] Shaw, "Towards an Ecological Identity," 175–253.

Chapter 3: Early Intermediate Pieces (Levels 3–5)

Chapter 3 consists of the most accessible selections in the collection *Children of Light*. Ranging from Levels 3 through 5, these pieces can be classified as early intermediate-level repertoire. They are comparable in difficulty to the easier selections in the *Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach,* Schumann's *Album for the Young,* and the easiest Diabelli *Sonatinas.*[95] In increasing level of difficulty, titles to be discussed in this chapter include:

- Green Paradise
- Blue Planet
- Sea Turtle
- African Elephant
- Prisms in the Forest

[95] Magrath, *Piano Literature for Teaching and Performance,* xiv.

Children of Light

Title: Green Paradise

Level: 3

Tempo: *Joyfully* (♩ = 108)

Meter: 5/8

Form: Binary

Key Signature: None

Pages: 2

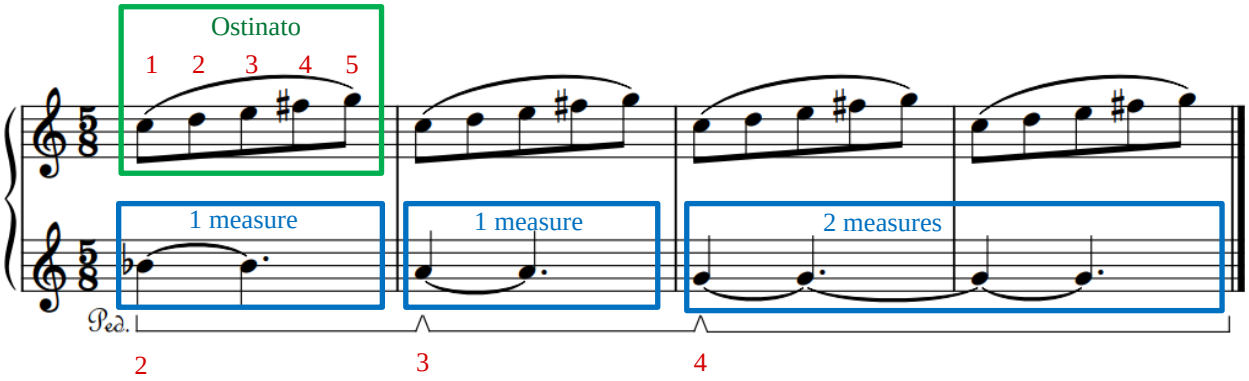
Compositional Overview:

“Green Paradise” is a Level 3 piece and the most accessible in the collection *Children of Light.* Two elements combine to create an ethereal and joyful aural effect: the scoring of both hands in the high register of the piano and a minimalistic accompaniment. Hand crossings by the left hand in the second half of the piece add melodic variety and visual interest for the audience.

“Green Paradise” is based on an ascending, stepwise, five-pitch ostinato, which is maintained by the right hand throughout (Example 3.1). This ostinato is characterized as a C major five-finger pattern with a raised fourth scale degree (F#). While composed in the irregular meter of 5/8, the recurring five-pitch ostinato fits into this meter quite naturally. Tanaka aligns the first beat of each measure with the first note of the five-pitch pattern, which is played by the first finger. These compositional components help to emphasize the downbeats and reinforce the pulse, which is particularly useful for a piece that utilizes an irregular meter.

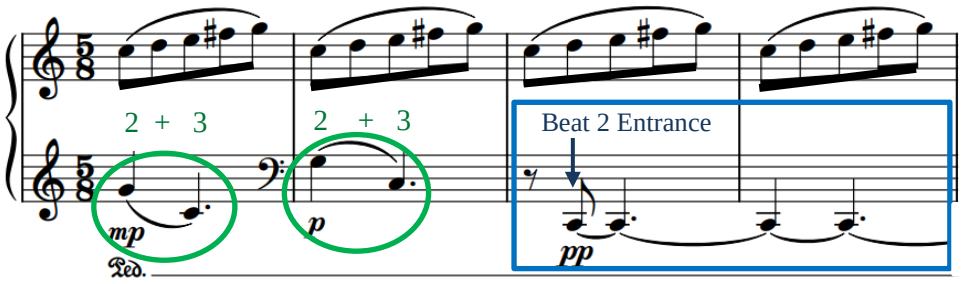
In terms of form, a loose binary structure is identified. The melodic material in the left hand distinguishes the two sections. The A section features a primarily stepwise and slowly moving melody played by the left hand without hand crossings. The duration of most of these melodic pitches is either one or two measures (refer to Example 3.1).

Example 3.1: “Green Paradise,” mm. 3–6 (A Section)



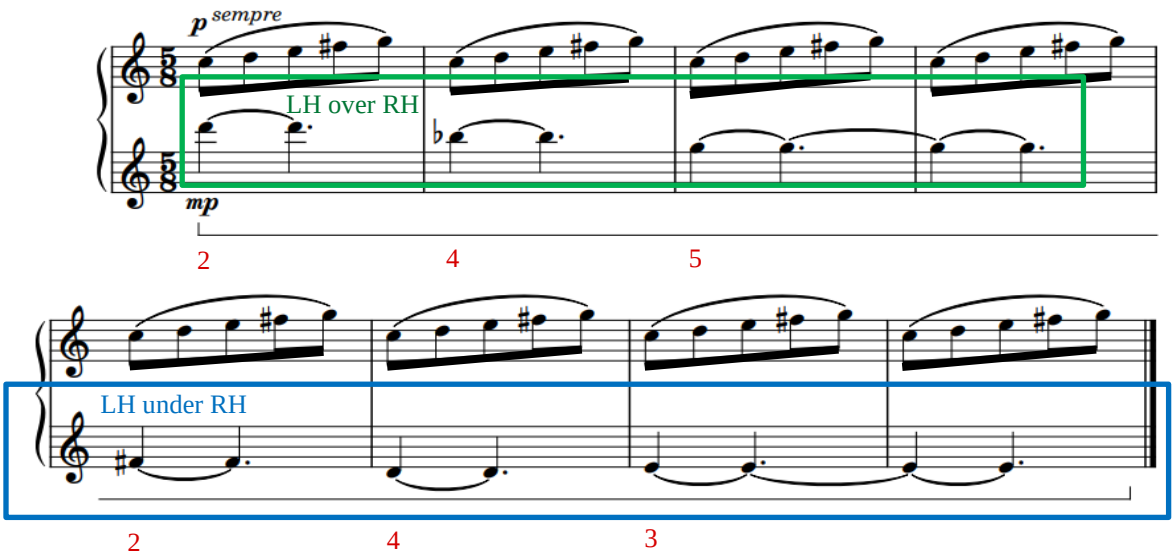
Because the melodic material enters on the downbeats, the hands line up well with each other. The only deviation to this pattern occurs at the end of each section. Rather than individual melodic pitches lasting for a full measure (5 beats), they are shortened into a 2 + 3 pattern and then extended to two and three measures, entering on beat 2 rather than the downbeat (Example 3.2).

Example 3.2: “Green Paradise,” mm. 11–14 (A Section)



In the B section, the rhythm of melodic pitches remains consistent with the A section. However, the melodic content is distinguished by the left hand crossing over the right hand, moving back and forth twice (Example 3.3). The B section also features the melodic interval of a third, whereas the A section emphasizes the interval of a second.

Example 3.3: “Green Paradise,” mm. 15–22 (B Section)



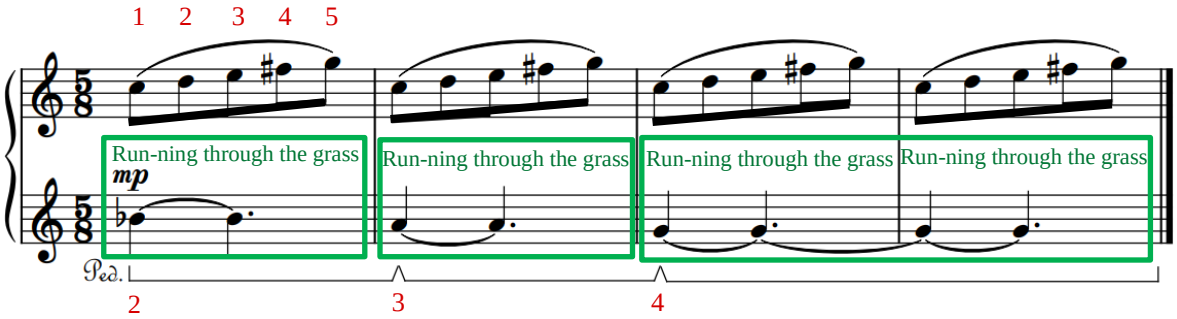
Pedagogical Applications:

“Green Paradise” is a Level 3 piece and an excellent choice to introduce playing in 5/8 meter, as the right-hand ostinato features a five-finger pattern that repeats every measure. Students at this level will be very familiar with five-finger patterns, so this is a particularly relevant connection to make.

This selection can be taught effectively by rote. When introducing “Green Paradise” to students, it is helpful to establish rhythmic accuracy by assigning a five-syllable word or phrase to the right-hand ostinato, such as “running through the grass.” This helps the student to intuitively sense the rhythm of the left hand, as its melodic pitches typically last for one or two measures, the equivalent of one or two iterations of “running through the grass.” Using this system, the student discovers that each sub-phrase is equal to four repetitions of “running through the grass”: one for each of Pitches 1 and 2, and two for Pitch 3 (Example 3.4). This rhythmic pattern recurs throughout the majority of the piece, so establishing a strong sense of

rhythm at the earliest stage of learning is fundamental. This also helps to reinforce accurate pedaling, as the pedal changes align with the left-hand pitches.

Example 3.4: “Green Paradise,” mm. 3–6 (A Section, first sub-phrase)



From a technical perspective, this piece is useful for teaching students how to play several notes in one gesture. The slur marking placed above every measure of the right-hand ostinato suggests this technique. To achieve this, the wrist must engage in a lateral motion that moves through the five-pitch ostinato. Additionally, the fourth and fifth pitches of the ostinato also require a slight raising of the wrist to help prepare the hand to transition back to the first pitch of the pattern (C). Repeating these motions each measure results in the right-hand wrist moving in a counter-clockwise direction. This ensures that the five pitches are being played in one gesture, which is beneficial both musically and technically. Engaging the wrist ensures more even, clear, and effortless playing that is free from physical fatigue.

Children of Light

Title: Blue Planet

Level: 4

Tempo: *From afar, as if you are watching the Earth from space* (♩. = 50)

Meter: 6/8

Form: Through-composed

Key Signature: None

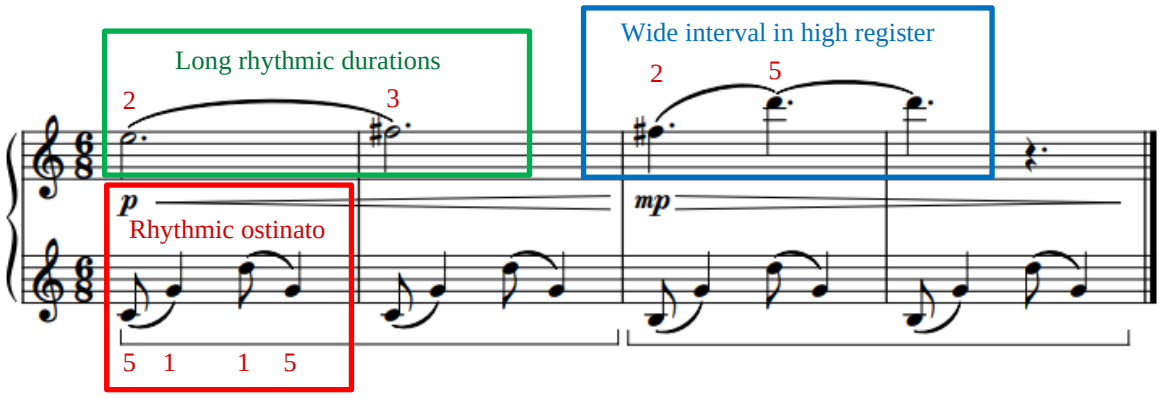
Pages: 1

Compositional Overview:

"Blue Planet" is a Level 4 piece that explores the concept of space, including rhythmic duration, register, and melodic contour. At just one page long, it is a brief miniature that captures the Japanese spatial concept of *ma.* One of the ways this is achieved is through the long rhythmic durations of the right-hand melody, which are primarily one and two beats long (Example 3.5). At a slow tempo, this creates considerable sonic space. Although the rhythms move slowly, wider melodic intervals provide a balance. While intervals of unison and a second are present in the melody, several larger intervals occur more frequently, including fourths, fifths, and sixths. In terms of register, many of the melodic pitches are notated with ledger lines above the staff. The high melodic register also contributes to the concept of space and embodies Tanaka's expression marking "From afar, as if you are watching the Earth from space."[96]

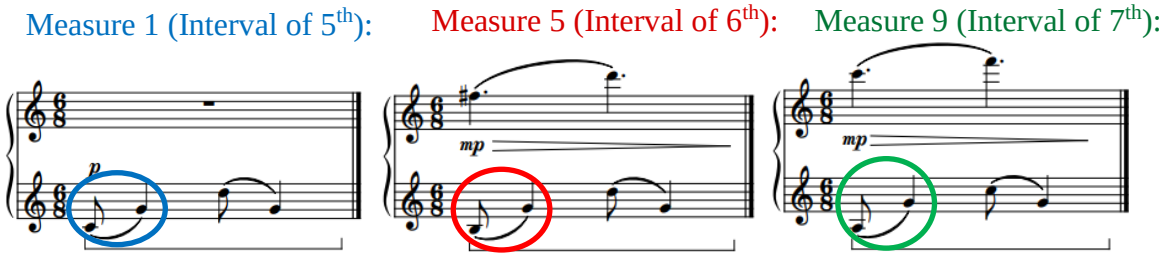
[96] Karen Tanaka, *Children of Light* (London: Chester Music, 1999), 11.

Example 3.5: “Blue Planet,” mm. 3–6 (First phrase)



The accompaniment provided by the left hand also contributes to the sense of space in this piece. Intervals range from fifths to sevenths, with no stepwise motion. These intervals are featured in a rhythmic ostinato that is common in the meter of 6/8, consisting of one eighth note followed by one quarter note (refer to Example 3.5). This rhythmic ostinato recurs during every beat of the piece. Tanaka uses these intervals to establish a focal point by beginning the accompaniment with a pattern of broken fifths in measure 1 and expanding the interval size from there. In measure 5, sixths are introduced, and in measure 9, sevenths are introduced (Example 3.6).

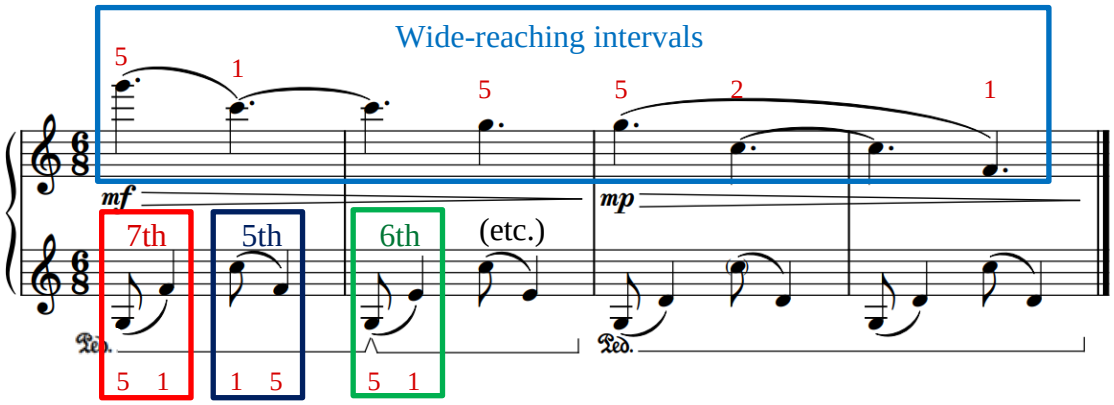
Example 3.6: “Blue Planet,” mm. 1, 5, 9 (LH intervals)



The climax of the piece occurs in measures 13 through 16, when both hands feature the longest span of wide-reaching intervals (Example 3.7). This is supported by a *mezzo forte* dynamic level,

the loudest dynamic marking of the piece. The selection closes with the right hand taking over the rhythmic ostinato, gradually fading away to *pianississimo (ppp)*.

Example 3.7: “Blue Planet,” mm. 13–16 (Climax)



Pedagogical Applications:

“Blue Planet” is a Level 4 selection that provides an opportunity for students to strengthen their rhythmic skills and awareness of the larger pulse in a compound meter. The fundamental component of this piece is to establish rhythmic accuracy and security of the left-hand ostinato. The quarter note in this rhythmic pattern (♪ ♩) is prone to rushing, as it feels much less stable than its retrograde (♩ ♪).

When introducing this piece, it is helpful for the student to embody and experience the rhythm in a variety of ways. To begin, the student and teacher can step to the rhythm around the studio while verbalizing the eighth-note microbeats: “1, 2, 3.” The teacher should lead the student to discover that there is no movement that takes place while saying “3.” However, verbalizing this number out loud helps the student to feel the space and time that this microbeat takes up. The teacher may choose to play the rhythm on a hand drum for reinforcement. Once this is comfortable, the student and teacher can continue stepping to the rhythm around the

studio, but replace the numbers with a movement-inspired phrase, such as “spinning planet.” Verbalizing both words as an eighth note followed by a quarter note equals the duration of one measure, which reinforces the sense of compound duple meter. This activity will help the student to make a connection between rhythm and movement. The teacher may then play the left-hand ostinato from the score while the student continues to step to the rhythm and verbalize the phrase “spinning planet.” As the final preparatory step, the student may improvise melodic patterns on the white keys using the “spinning planet” rhythm. It is important to emphasize the two-note slur during this step, as it will directly transfer to the articulation notated in the score. Using these preparatory steps allows students to experience this rhythmic pattern in a variety of ways that help promote long-term rhythmic accuracy.

Despite its thin texture and slowly moving melody, “Blue Planet” contains multiple elements that make it more challenging than it sounds. In terms of reading, almost half of the right-hand pitches are notated using ledger lines, and a few accidentals are incorporated as well. The left hand not only maintains the “spinning planet” rhythm throughout (), but it also changes position every beat. The interval sizes of these position changes also vary, making the left-hand material somewhat unpredictable. Musically, this piece features four-measure phrases with hairpin dynamics. As the melody moves slowly and in single notes, students develop the ability to listen and sing “through” notes to help shape the phrases with musical sensitivity.

Children of Light

Title: **Sea Turtle**

Level: 4

Tempo: *Gently* (= 58)

Meter: 2/2

Form: Ternary

Key Signature: None

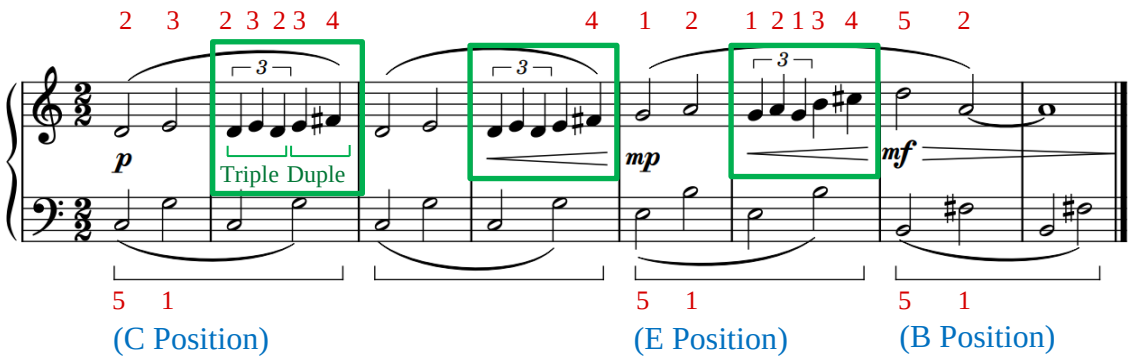
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Compositional Overview:

"Sea Turtle" is a Level 4 piece that captures the peace of a turtle swimming slowly through gentle waters. With its lyrical melodic lines, range of dynamics, and elements of rubato, this piece can be characterized as neo-romantic in style.

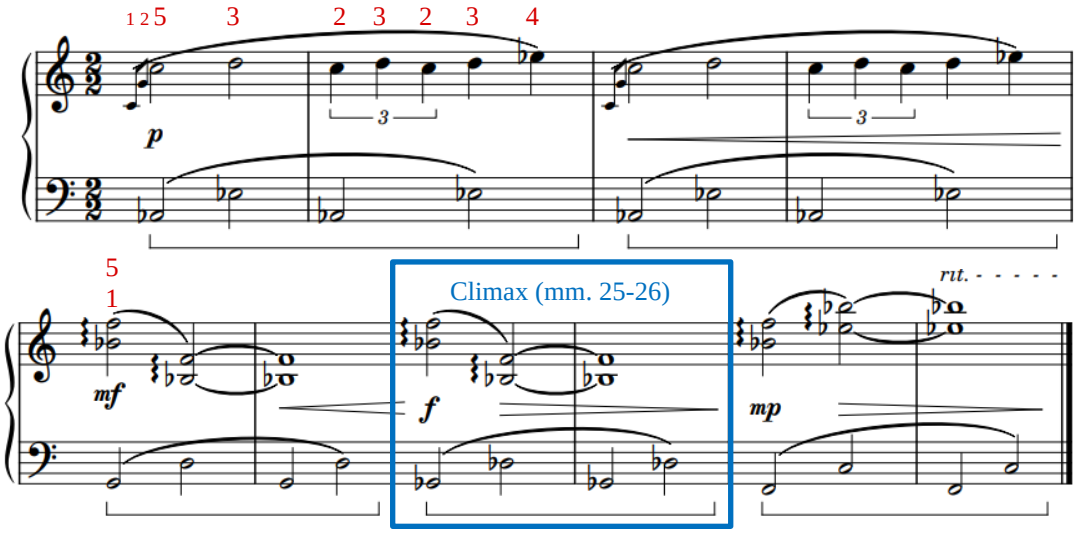
"Sea Turtle" is based on a simple broken fifth accompaniment in a steady rhythmic pulse performed by the left hand. The consistent alternation between the root and fifth in the accompaniment creates a gentle sense of rocking, and the incorporation of the sustain pedal results in a blurred effect that emulates the sensation of moving through water. While the interval of a perfect fifth is maintained throughout in the left hand, diatonic and chromatic wandering occurs, as the specific pitches of the perfect fifths change every few measures (Example 3.8). In terms of rhythm, this piece features the alternation between duple and triple rhythmic subdivisions. This is formed by the quarter-note triplet group followed by two straight quarter notes, a rhythmic pattern that recurs throughout the melody in this piece.

Example 3.8: “Sea Turtle,” mm. 3–10 (A Section)



In terms of melodic content, the A sections feature single-line, lyrical writing in mostly stepwise motion. Phrase lengths are typically eight measures long. While the B section contains similar melodic material to the A section, the higher register and addition of grace notes and rolled chords create a wider, more expansive musical effect. The chromatic descent of the perfect-fifth accompaniment in the B section also leads to the climax of the piece, designated with the *forte* dynamic marking in measures 25 and 26 (Example 3.9). This is followed by the A’ section, a shortened version of the original A section that has been transposed up a minor seventh. The pitches continue to move up in register as the piece fades away, designated by the expression marking *morendo.*

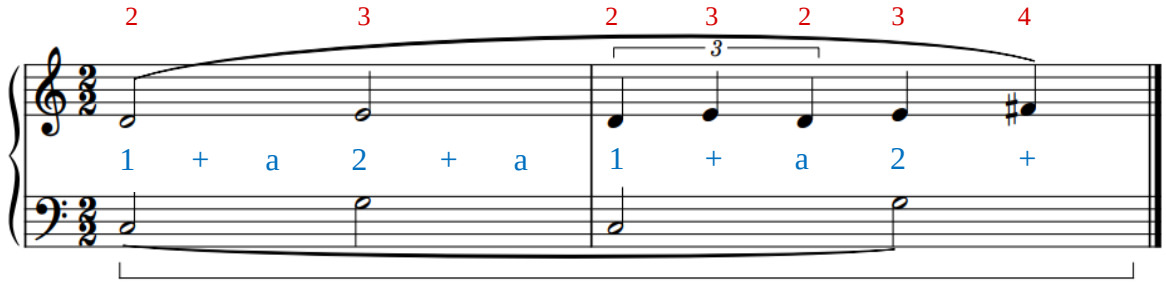
Example 3.9: “Sea Turtle,” mm. 19–28 (B Section, Climax)



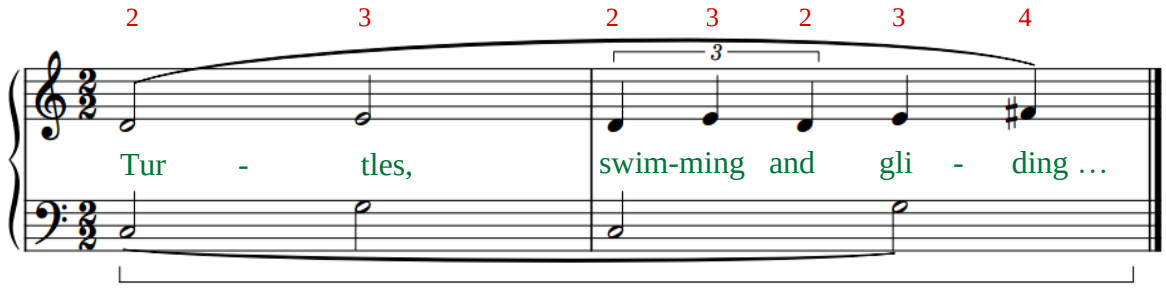
Pedagogical Applications:

As a Level 4 piece, “Sea Turtle” contains a rhythmic challenge that is likely a less-familiar concept for students at this level: the alternation of triple and duple subdivisions. To introduce this concept, the student could tap the half-note pulse in their lap while speaking rhythmic subdivisions, first in triplets (1 + a 2 + a), and then in duplets (1 + 2 +). After mastering these subdivisions independently, the student can alternate between them: tapping the half-note pulse while speaking four beats of triplets followed by four beats of duplets. The final step is to alternate between triple and duple subdivisions using the right-hand rhythmic pattern in measures 3 and 4 (**1** + a **2** + a **1** + a **2** +) (Example 3.10). With sufficient preparation of moving between these two types of subdivisions, the student will be set up to internalize this rhythm and perform it with accuracy and consistency. A young student might enjoy putting words to this rhythm as an additional practice technique, such as “Tur-tles, swim-ming and gli-ding…” (Example 3.11).

Example 3.10: “Sea Turtle,” mm. 3–4 (A Section, Metrical counting)



Example 3.11: “Sea Turtle,” mm. 3–4 (A Section, Syllabic counting)



In terms of technique, the right hand should be played with firm fingertips and supported by forearm rotation. This combination not only ensures a smooth, legato sound with effective projection, but it also allows for evenness of tone and rhythm. In the measures with triplet figures, it is advisable to begin the triplet on the second finger. Doing so results in the second, third, and fourth fingers playing the measures with triplet figures. Because these fingers are adjacent to each other and similar in length, they will provide the most reliability for evenness of tone and rhythm. The use of forearm rotation allows the fingers to play freely without tension. However, utilizing this technique is not an end goal in of itself. Rather, it is a gateway to achieving the musical goals of producing a beautiful tone and shaping phrases with dynamic nuance. Technical goals must be viewed as a means to an end, as the final goal is always to use technique as a tool for achieving musical artistry.

"Sea Turtle" is a particularly effective selection for a student who plays with expression and musical sensitivity. Balance between melody and accompaniment is critical, as well as utilizing a delicate and gentle tone. To help promote balance between the hands, it is helpful for the student to play the left-hand accompaniment about halfway into the keys, just enough to make a consistent, soft sound. This will create a sense of floating and buoyancy, providing the aural space needed to effectively project the melody with a fuller, deeper tone. Melodic shaping of the phrases is also a key component to this piece. Tanaka notates frequent and specific dynamic markings that must be thoughtfully paced in order to achieve a mature musical interpretation. It is also important to note that strong reading skills of accidentals are required, as they are incorporated with frequency. This is particularly true for the left-hand accompaniment.

Children of Light

Title: **African Elephant**

Level: 4

Tempo: *Lively* (♩. = 152)

Meter: 6/8, 9/8

Form: Rondo (ABA'BA")

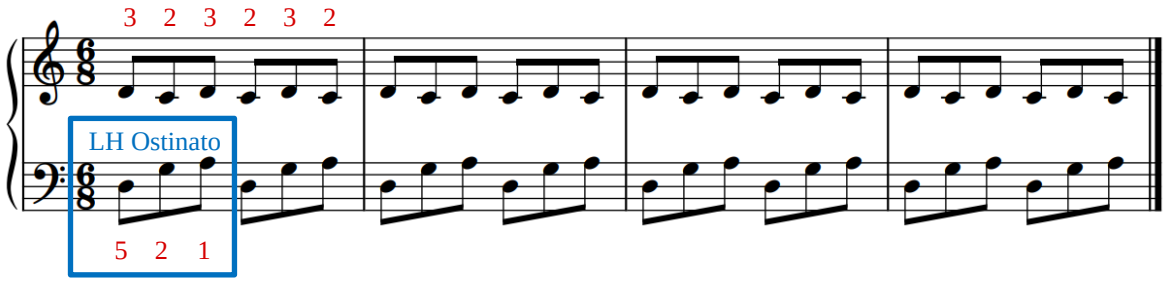
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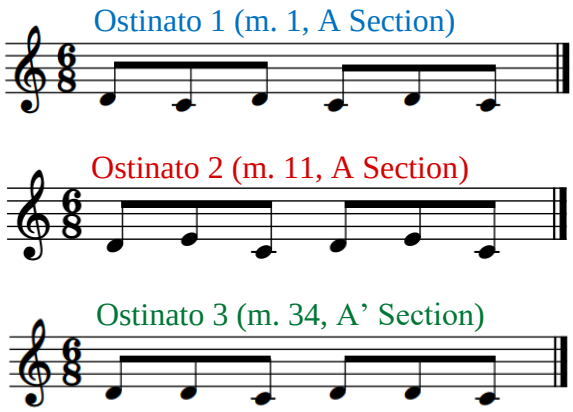
Compositional Overview:

"African Elephant" is a lively, driving Level 4 piece and one of the most minimalistic selections in *Children of Light.* It is based on a recurring three-pitch ostinato that is stated by the left hand in measure 5 and continues through the end of the piece (Example 3.12). The A sections also feature three right-hand ostinati that are very slight variations of each other (Example 3.13). Because both hands play ostinati in the A sections, the aural effect is textural and atmospheric in lieu of having melodic content. The recurring ostinati performed at a very fast tempo suggest a herd of elephants charging towards the listener. This image is supported by Tanaka's dynamic markings of a gradual crescendo leading to the *szforzando* that announces the B section.

Example 3.12: "African Elephant," mm. 5–8 (A Section)

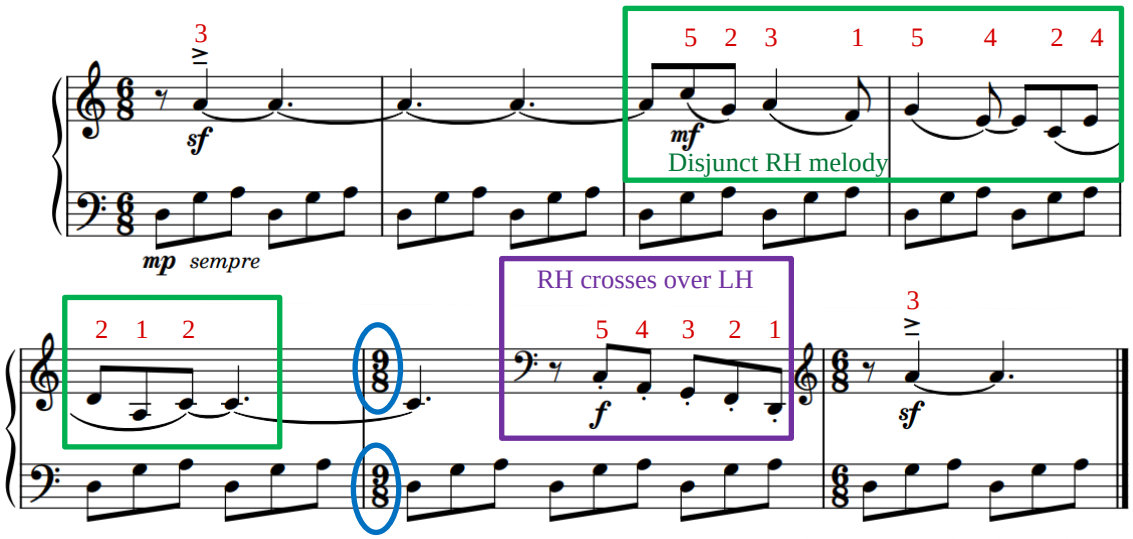


Example 3.13: “African Elephant,” mm. 1, 11, 34 (Three Right-Hand Ostinati)



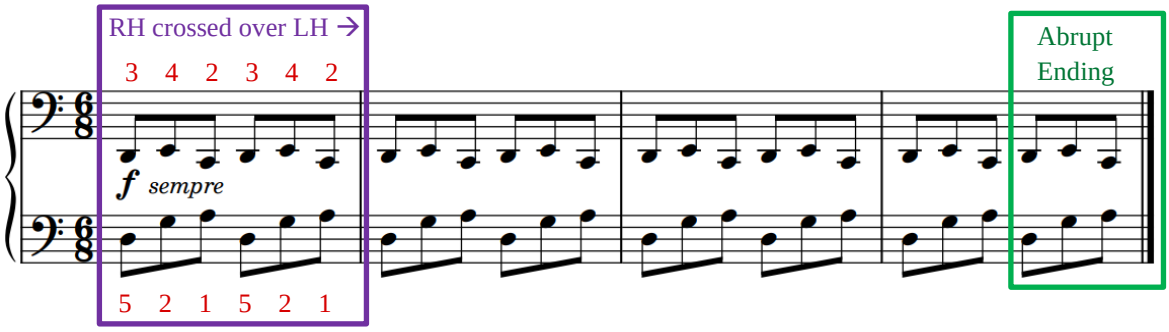
In contrast to the A section, a melody is featured in the right hand throughout the B section. Its shape is angular and disjunct, although the interval sizes do not exceed a perfect fourth. The primary time signature of this piece is 6/8, although one measure in the B section changes to 9/8. This occurs in measure 25, which is also the measure when the right hand briefly crosses over the left (Example 3.14).

Example 3.14: “African Elephant,” mm. 20–26 (B Section)



Later, the element of hand-crossing is blended into the final A section. Labeled as a coda in the score, the final A section features the right hand crossed over the left hand for the entirety of the section. As a result, the register is quite low for the hands. With both of them playing ostinati, there is a return to the textural and atmospheric effect of the opening. As the piece reaches a conclusion, an extended crescendo builds momentum and intensity until the continuous eighth-note groupings come to a grinding halt (Example 3.15). This method of ending a piece is characteristic of works composed in a minimalist style.

Example 3.15: "African Elephant," mm. 57–60 (End of A" Section)



Pedagogical Applications:

As a Level 4 piece, it is likely that "African Elephant" will be a student's first introduction to the minimalistic style in its purest form. Therefore, it is important to guide the student carefully through the music and identify the measures in which the right-hand ostinati change. Because all three ostinati use some combination of the pitches C, D, and E (refer to Example 3.13), it is challenging to see their precise entrances while playing at a rapid tempo. Color-coding the first measure of each right-hand ostinato will provide the student with visual cues that will help to divide the right-hand line into more manageable segments.

In terms of note reading, the lack of key signature or any accidentals make this piece accessible to learn. The highly consistent time signature also contributes to the piece's accessibility. However, it is possible for the steady stream of notes in both hands to be visually overwhelming to the student during the early stages of learning. Therefore, it is advisable to introduce this piece as a combination of rote and note teaching. All ostinati in the A sections can initially be taught by rote. Once learned, they can then be referenced in the score based on the color-coding described previously. The B section, however, can be learned more effectively by reading from the score. While patterns exist here, too, they are lengthier and contain more disjunct intervallic content. The melodic patterns in the B section are more recognizable by identifying them in the score (refer to Example 3.14).

Several technical elements are essential to performing this piece with freedom and physical ease. Both hands will benefit from moving the wrists in small, continuous motions. For the left-hand ostinato, which remains consistent from measure 4 through the end of the piece, it is important to utilize a subtle circular motion of the wrist that moves in a clockwise direction. This will provide the physical support and stability needed to repeat this pattern continuously. Regarding the right hand, Ostinati 1 and 3 require a gentle rotation of the wrist to help it stay loose and ensure the stamina required to execute short, repeated patterns at a rapid tempo. Because Ostinato 2 contains three pitches rather than two, a different technique is required. This ostinato can be successfully executed with a subtle "in and out" motion originating from the elbow. Fingers 2, 3, and 4 should be used to perform this pattern to ensure evenness of tone and rhythm.

Children of Light

Title: **Prisms in the Forest**

Level: 5

Tempo: *Colorfully* (♩ = 96)

Meter: 5/8

Form: Ternary

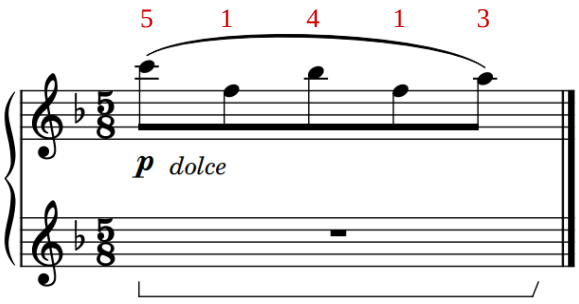
Key Signature: 1 flat

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Compositional Overview:

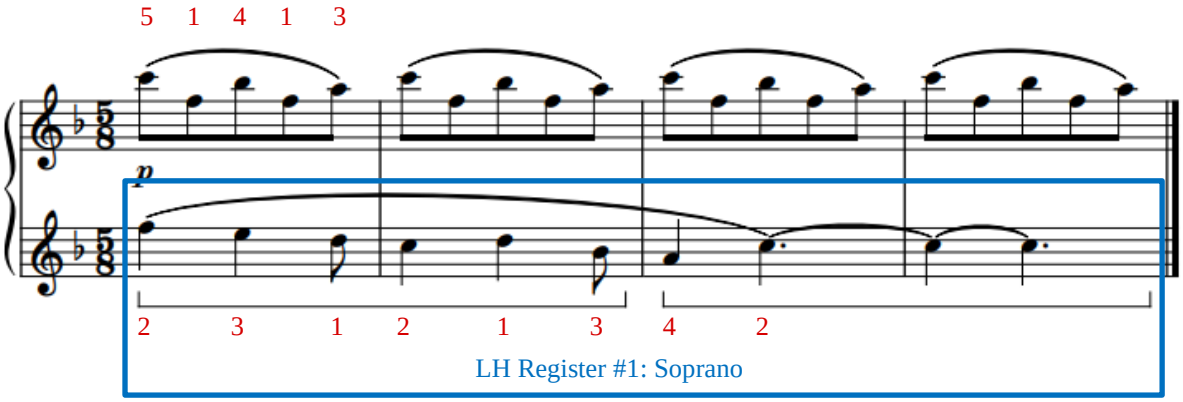
"Prisms in the Forest" is a Level 5 piece that evokes the image of light refracting through the trees. With its long, melodic lines and ostinato accompaniment, this selection contains elements of both neo-romanticism and minimalism. The melody is featured in the left hand, while the right hand provides the ostinato accompaniment. This texture is utilized by Tanaka in several pieces throughout the collection. The right-hand ostinato consists of five pitches (Example 3.16). As the 5/8 time signature remains stable throughout the piece, this ostinato fits into the space of exactly one measure. The inclusion of a predictable accompaniment pattern allows the irregular meter to become more accessible for the student.

Example 3.16: "Prisms in the Forest," m. 1 (Original RH ostinato)

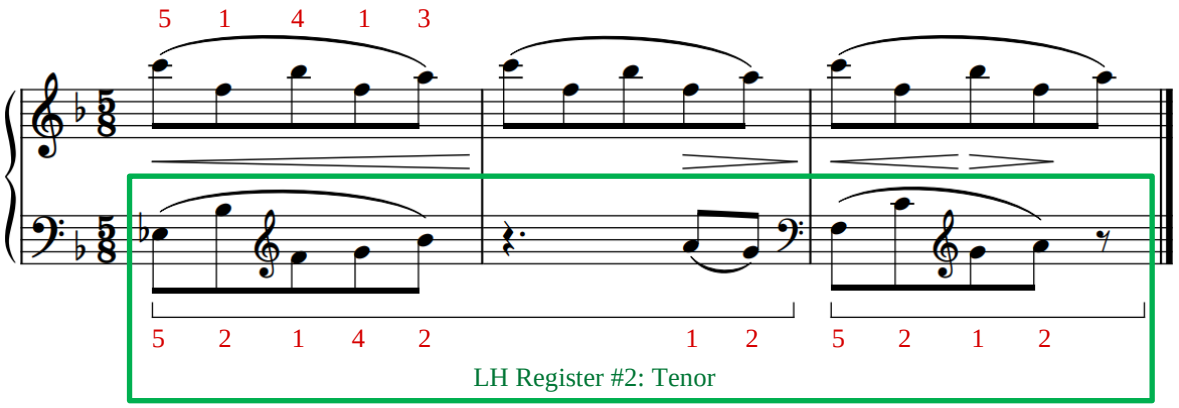


In terms of structure, “Prisms in the Forest” is a clear example of ternary form. The left hand in the A sections features a single-line melody that fluctuates between two registers (Examples 3.17 and 3.18).

Example 3.17: “Prisms in the Forest,” mm. 3–6 (A Section)



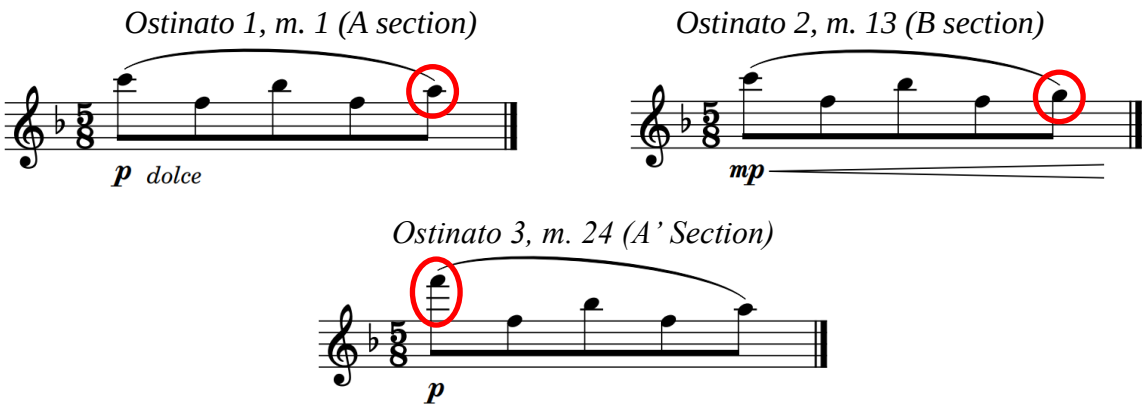
Example 3.18: “Prisms in the Forest,” mm. 7–9 (A Section)



In contrast, the left hand in the B section is based on rolled chords, with the top note of each chord belonging to the melodic line in a single register. Also supporting the clearly defined form is the accompaniment material of the right hand. Its five-pitch ostinato remains nearly consistent throughout. However, in the first measure of each section, one of the five pitches is altered

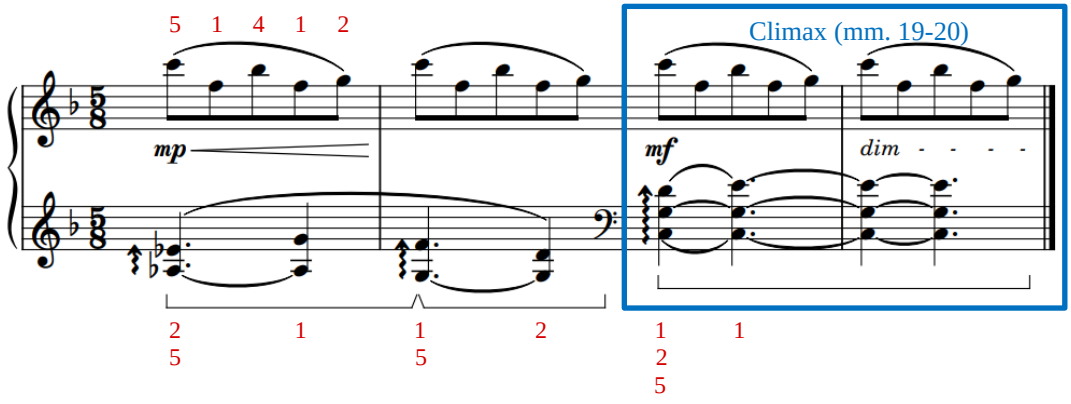
(Example 3.19). This results in very slight variations of the ostinato that distinguish the sections from each other.

Example 3.19: "Prisms in the Forest," mm. 1, 13, 24 (Three Right-Hand Ostinati)



The phrase lengths in this piece are typically four measures. Additionally, there is a considerable amount of dynamic detail notated in the score, ranging from *ppp* to *mf*. Hairpin dynamics are also incorporated frequently and typically last for one or two measures. The climax of the piece occurs in the B section during measures 19 and 20. This marks the loudest point of the piece *(mf)*, as well as the widest-reaching rolled chord in the left hand, which spans the interval of a ninth before extending to a tenth (Example 3.20).

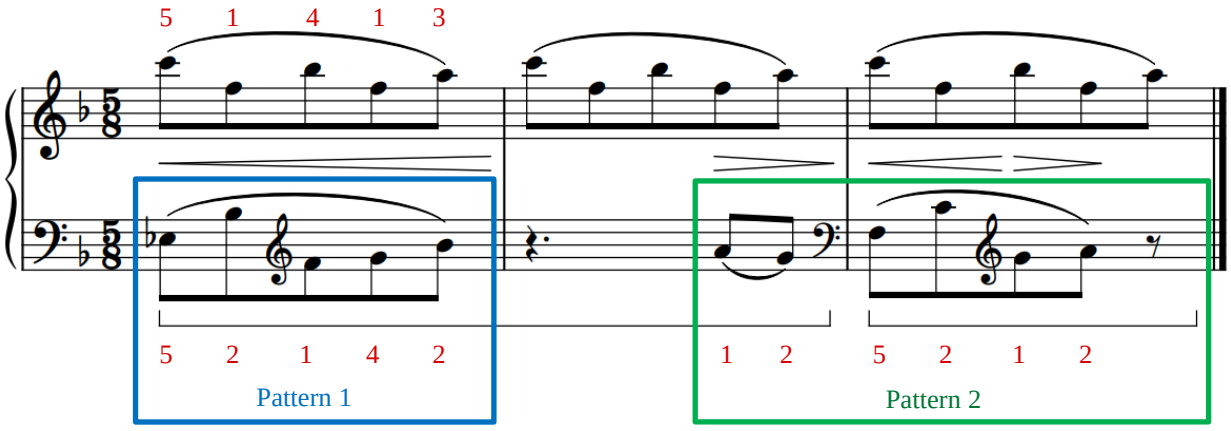
Example 3.20: "Prisms in the Forest," mm. 17–20 (B Section)



Pedagogical Applications:

As a Level 5 piece, "Prisms in the Forest" contains a note-reading challenge that is worthy of discussion: the left hand vacillating between both bass and treble clefs. This occurs regularly throughout the piece, particularly during the A sections. Most measures that contain clef changes, however, are restatements of the two patterns labeled in Example 3.21. Therefore, this simplifies the challenge of alternating between treble and bass clefs. In the B section, the lowest pitches of the rolled chords are sustained by ties, while the highest pitches of the rolled chords move by step or skip (refer to Example 3.20). This is also a potential reading challenge for students, as the eyes must be trained to distinguish between the pitches that are held and those that move. Marking the pitches that move with a highlighter will attract visual attention, making them easier to see and to play.

Example 3.21: "Prisms in the Forest," mm. 7–9 (A Section)



In terms of technique, flexibility of the wrist is of high importance. The left-hand melody often has consecutive notes that are spaced apart from each other, such as in measures 7 through 9, which are featured in Example 3.21. It is essential to utilize a lateral and flexible motion of the wrist. This will help the student to play these groups of four and five notes as one gesture, which

is critical to moving through these notes with ease. This physical motion also promotes a horizontal sense of the melodic line, creating a forward motion that allows for a push and pull of the tempo. Lateral wrist movement is also required for the rolled chords that span wider reaches, such as the ninths and tenths that occur during the climax of the piece (refer to Example 3.20).

The most important musical challenge of this piece is distinguishing between the layers of melody and accompaniment. The purpose of the right-hand ostinato is to provide a backdrop for the left-hand melody. One strategy for achieving an effective balance between the hands is to discuss the concept of key depth with the student.[97] The teacher could demonstrate what it looks and sounds like to play at the escape point, halfway and three-quarters into the key, and at the base of the key. After having the student experiment with these key depths, the teacher can instruct the student to play the accompaniment one level below the melody. For example, if the melody is marked *piano*, it would be played halfway into the key while the accompaniment plays at the escape point. If the melody is marked *mezzo forte*, it would be played three-quarters of the way into the key while the accompaniment plays halfway into the key. Using key depths to demonstrate balance between melody and accompaniment provides a concrete way for the student to see and feel the difference between these layers. It also helps the student to develop an effective sound model for balancing melody and accompaniment.

[97] Joanne Haroutounian, *Palette of Touches: Intermediate Level* (San Diego, CA: Kjos Music Press, 2016), 5–6.

Chapter 4: Intermediate Pieces (Level 6)

Chapter 4 contains the largest number of selections from *Children of Light*. Comprised of pieces designated as Level 6, these works can be classified as intermediate-level repertoire. They are comparable in difficulty to J.S. Bach's *Little Preludes,* Clementi's *Sonatinas, Op. 36,* and Burgmüller's *25 Progressive Pieces, Op. 100.*[98] In increasing level of difficulty, titles to be discussed in this chapter include:

- Dugong
- Giant Panda
- Wild Water Buffalo
- Coral Reef
- Red-Faced Parrot
- Air
- Grevy's Zebra
- Kiwi

[98] Magrath, *Piano Literature for Teaching and Performance,* xv.

Children of Light

Title: **Dugong**

Level: 6

Tempo: *Gracefully* (𝅗𝅥. = 50)

Meter: 3/4

Form: Ternary + Coda

Key Signature: None

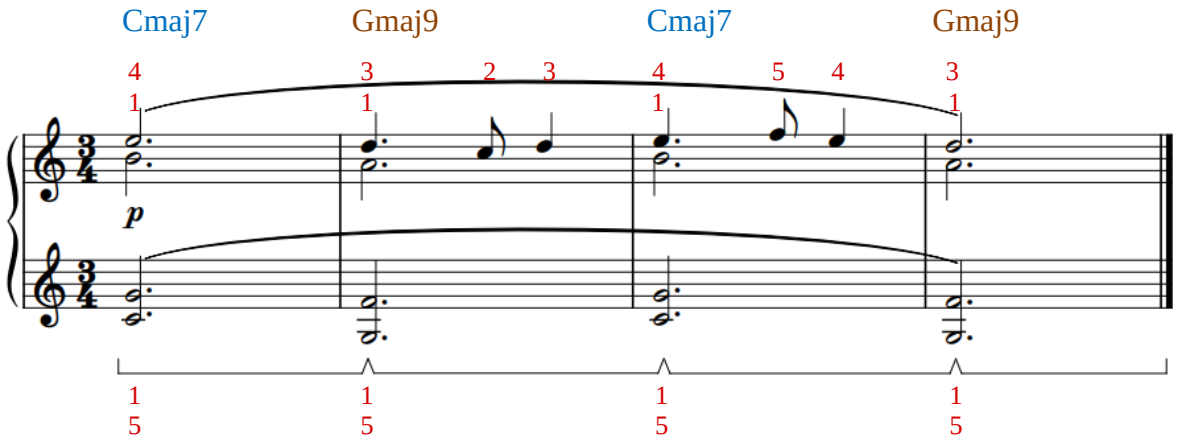
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Compositional Overview:

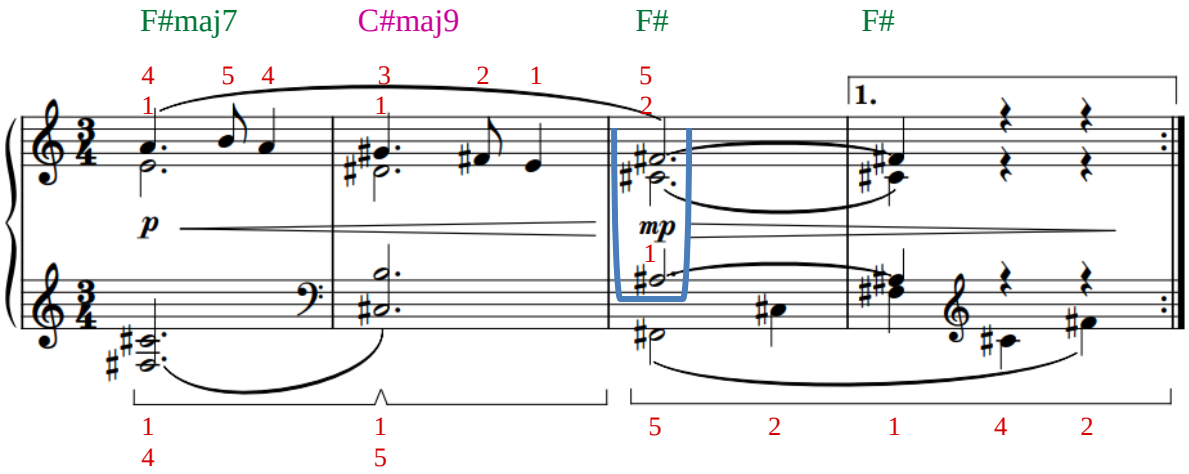
“Dugong” is the most accessible Level 6 piece in this collection. With its legato articulation, four-part chordal texture, and abundance of tonal harmonies, this piece contains elements of neo-romanticism.

“Dugong” serves as an effective transition piece from Romantic to contemporary piano literature. This is evidenced by several of its compositional characteristics, including a stable meter and tempo, four- and eight-measure phrases, lyrical melodic lines, frequent hairpin dynamics, and the incorporation of accidentals that create tonal harmonies. However, the distinguishing factor that sets this piece apart from the Romantic period is its harmonic language. Although the harmonies themselves are tonal, they do not follow traditional harmonic progressions. For example, the A section begins by alternating between the chords Cmaj7 and Gmaj9, which suggests a general sense of C Major as a tonal center (Example 4.1). However, by the end of the A section, just twelve measures later, the F#maj7 and C#maj9 chords suggest a sense of F# Major as a tonal center (Example 4.2). While these tonalities are considerably distant from each other, Tanaka weaves the harmonic material in such a way that the transition between these unrelated keys is achieved with flow and finesse.

Example 4.1: “Dugong,” mm. 1–4 (Beginning of A Section)



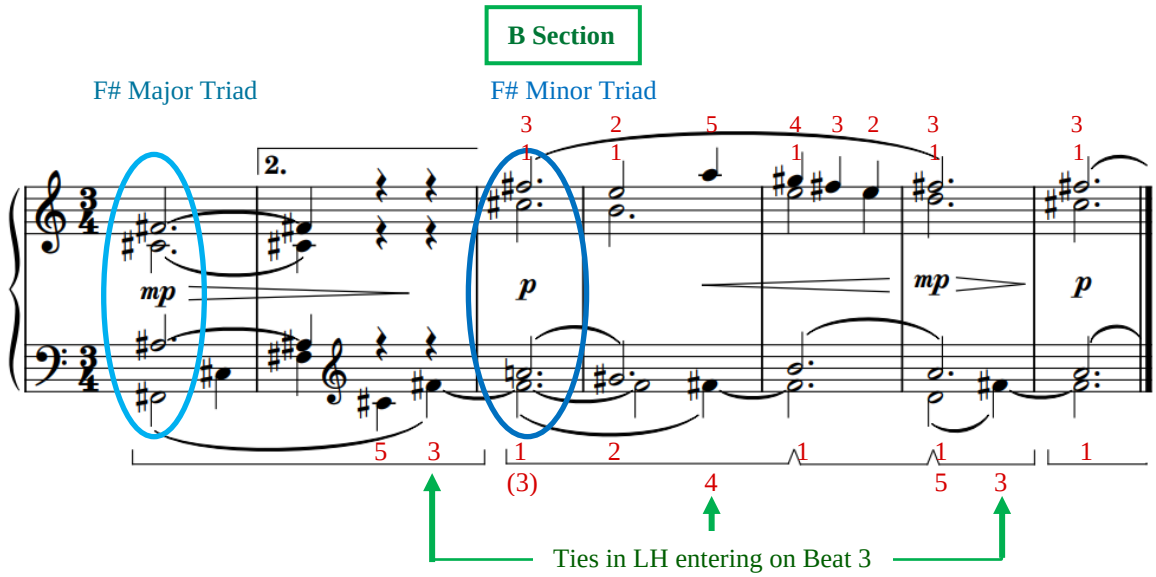
Example 4.2: “Dugong,” mm. 13–16 (End of A Section)



To add further harmonic interest, the F# major triad that concludes the A section is immediately followed by an F# minor triad, which announces the B section (Example 4.3). The shift from major to minor produces a notable color change that distinguishes between the two sections. Along with the harmonic shift from major to minor, the B section is also defined by its use of ties in the left hand. Most often, harmonies announced on downbeats are preceded by the

lowest pitch of the left-hand chord entering on Beat 3 of the previous measure. It is then tied into the downbeat of the following measure (refer to Example 4.3).

Example 4.3: “Dugong,” mm. 15, 17–22 (Transition to B Section)



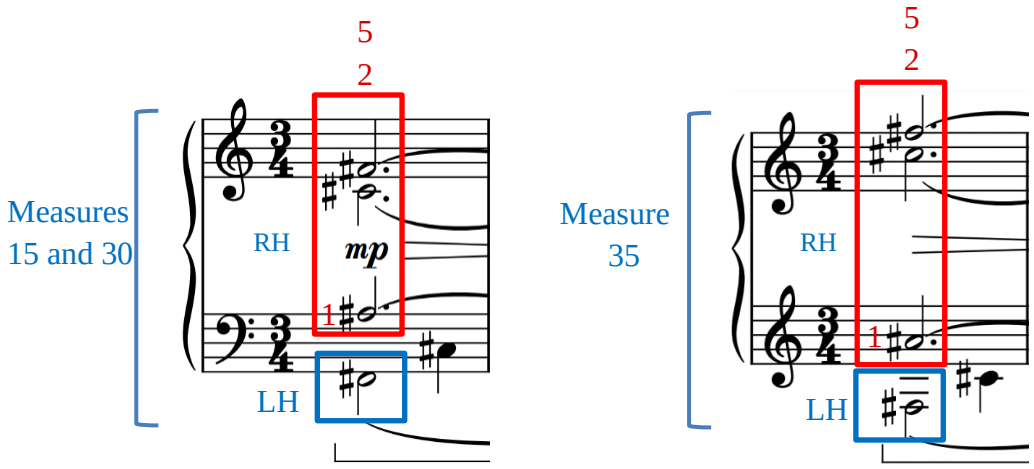
Pedagogical Applications:

As a Level 6 piece, the four-part chordal texture characterizing “Dugong” invites the opportunity to address the concept of voicing with students. Throughout the selection, the melody is featured in the soprano line. This indicates that it is necessary to voice towards the tops of the chords. A strategy that could be useful in achieving this goal is to ask the student to play each downbeat as it is written, and then quickly release all of the fingers except for the one playing the soprano line. This finger will continue depressing the key so that the melodic line is sustained and can continue to play the next melodic pitch in rhythm. The benefit of this practice technique is twofold: 1) releasing all other fingers but the one playing the melody trains the hand to apply more weight to the melodic pitch being sustained, and 2) it allows the ear to aurally engage in recognizing melodic pitches and make decisions about how to shape them.

In a piece that features a chordal texture, melodic shaping directly corresponds to harmonic shaping. To some degree, the predictability of four- and eight-measure phrases in this selection provides a sense of intuition in regards to shaping. Additionally, Tanaka notates a substantial amount of dynamic detail in the score, including a considerable number of hairpin dynamics (refer to Examples 4.2 and 4.3). These markings from the composer help to clarify her intentions for the harmonic shaping of this piece.

Several elements related to the note reading in this piece are worthy of discussion. Accidentals are notated frequently, so it is necessary for students to be able to read them with fluency. Additionally, the left-hand part is notated in the treble clef for most of the piece. A brief shift to the bass clef occurs at the end of the A section (measure 15) and the beginning of the coda (measure 30). These measures, in addition to measure 35, feature chords that may require the use of hand distribution to avoid arpeggiating the bass and tenor pitches, which span the interval of a tenth (Example 4.4). For students with smaller hands, the right hand can play the A#4 notated in the bass clef along with the pitches C#4 and F#4 that are notated in the treble clef. This results in the right hand playing an F# major triad in first inversion, which is very comfortable for the hand. This distribution allows the left hand to play F#2 as a single pitch, thus eliminating the potential need for the left hand to arpeggiate F#2 and A#4.

Example 4.4: “Dugong,” mm. 15, 30, 35 (Suggested Hand Distribution)



Children of Light

Title: **Giant Panda**

Level: 6

Tempo: *Tenderly* (♩ = 90)

Meter: 5/8, 4/4, 6/8

Form: Ternary + Coda

Key Signature: 6 sharps

Pages: 2

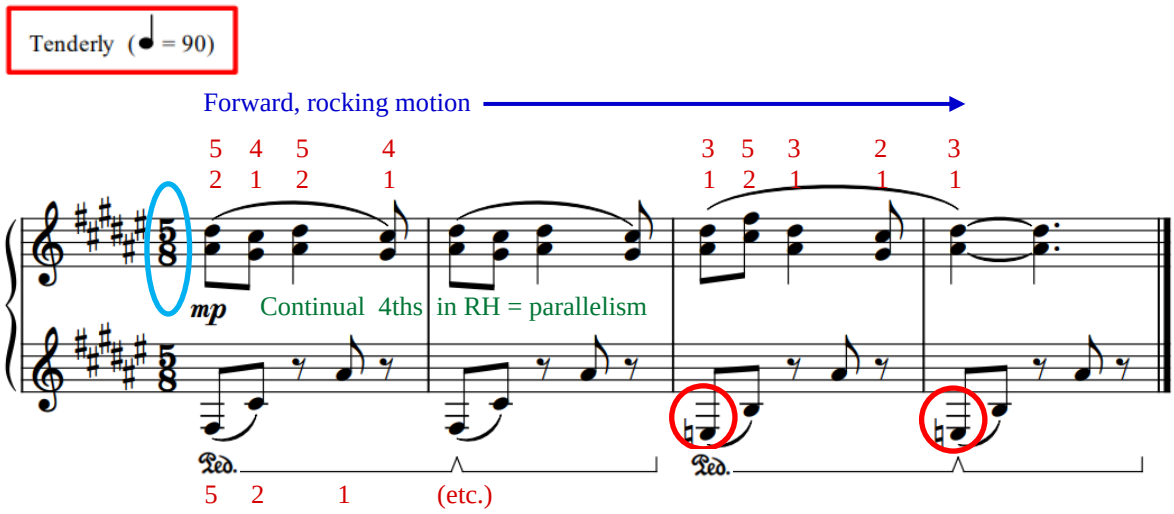
Compositional Overview:

"Giant Panda" is a Level 6 piece that exudes musical sensitivity and delicacy of tone. Played almost exclusively on the black keys and notated in the key signature of F-sharp major, this selection has a pentatonic flair. The pentatonic scale is integral to the traditional folk music of Japan, and it has also been adopted by western composers such as Debussy. Tanaka's incorporation of this scale reflects stylistic influences from both traditional Japanese music and French impressionism.

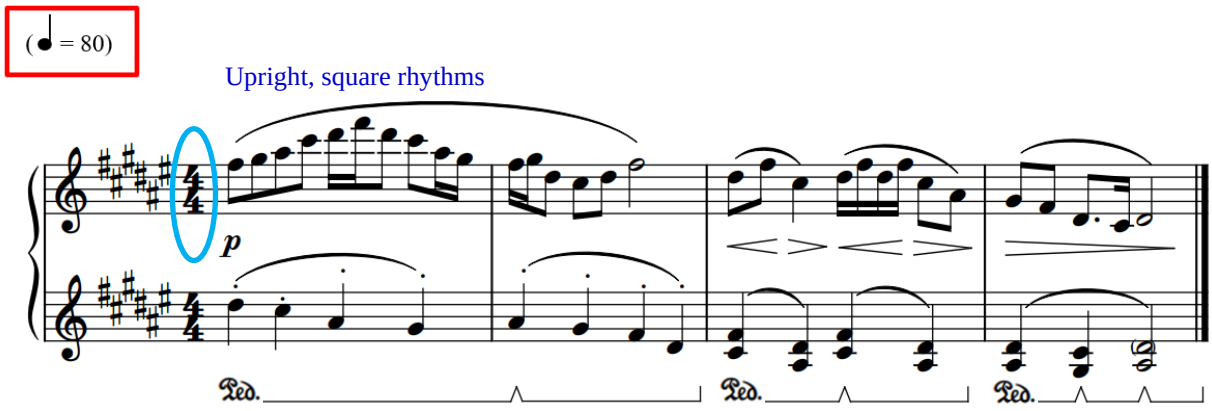
The sections of this piece are clearly defined by a variety of compositional characteristics. Specific meter and tempo indications are notated at the beginning of the A and B sections, and distinctive textures and characters accompany them. The A section is notated in the irregular meter of 5/8 with a tempo marking of ♩ = 90 (Example 4.5). The B section, however, is notated in the simple meter of 4/4 with a tempo marking of ♩ = 80, which eventually slows down to ♩ = 74 (Example 4.6). In terms of character, the A section exhibits a gentle forward motion in which each measure continuously rolls into the next with natural ease. This sense of movement is generated by the irregular meter and continual sense of rocking back and forth

between pitches in the right hand. In contrast, the B section features metrical stability, and the rhythms between the hands are more upright and square. These distinctions in texture and character enhance the contrast between the A and B sections.

Example 4.5: “Giant Panda,” mm. 1–4 (Beginning of A Section)



Example 4.6: “Giant Panda,” mm. 9–12 (Beginning of B Section)

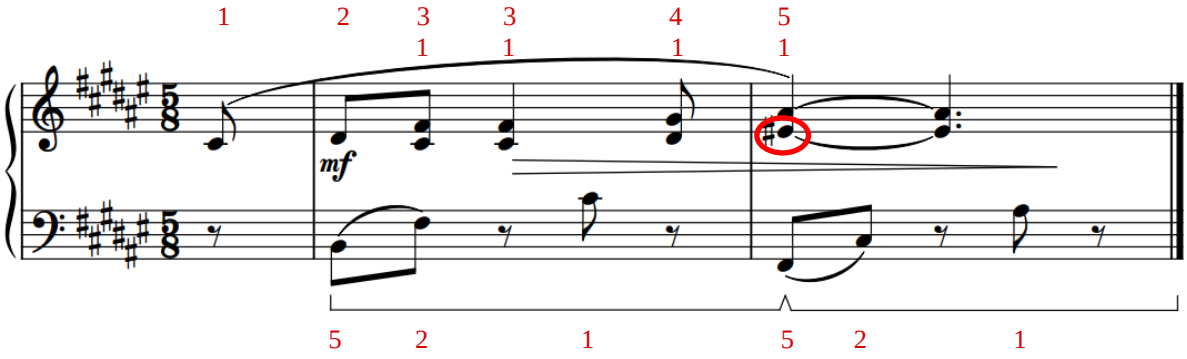


It is intriguing to examine the ways in which Tanaka experiments with pentatonicism in this piece, particularly with how it relates to her background with both Eastern and Western musical traditions. Complete pentatonicism is found in the B section, as there are no exceptions in terms of pitch content. The pitches F#, G#, A#, C#, and D# are used exclusively in this

section, and the single-line melody has an expansive range of more than two octaves (refer to Example 4.6). The use of the pentatonic scale in the B section could suggest an association with Tanaka and the traditional folk music of her native Japan. Additionally, the subject matter of giant pandas further supports Tanaka's incorporation of the pentatonic scale, as these animals are native to China, another country that uses pentatonicism in its traditional folk music.

While the A section opens with a pentatonic flair, the scale degree flat-7 (E-natural) is notated in measures 3 and 4 (refer to Example 4.5), and scale degree 7 (E-sharp) makes a brief appearance in measure 8 (Example 4.7). Therefore, the A section is not fully pentatonic, although it generally leans in this direction. One compositional technique that Tanaka uses in the A section is the concept of parallelism. The right hand maintains the interval of a perfect fourth throughout, often rocking back and forth between adjacent pitches. The compositional technique of parallelism is the equivalent of chordal planing, except that only two pitches move by the same interval instead of a complete chord. Planing is often associated with impressionistic music, and it is a compositional technique often utilized by Debussy. While the incorporation of the pentatonic scale in the B section reflects Tanaka's musical influences from the East, her use of parallelism in the A section seems to reflect her musical influences from the West.

Example 4.7: "Giant Panda," mm. 7–8 (End of A Section)



Pedagogical Applications:

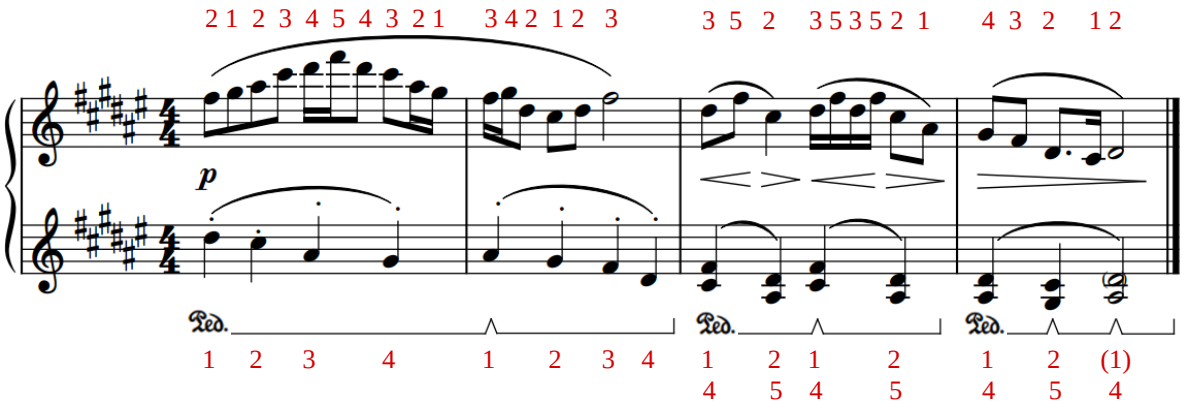
"Giant Panda" is a Level 6 piece notated in the key signature of F-sharp major. While six sharps might appear challenging to the student, the teacher can simplify note-reading by explaining that the piece is played primarily on the black keys, with the exception of the E-natural in measures 3 and 4 and E-sharp in measure 8. While the key signature indicates that the pitch B will be natural (and thus a white key), Tanaka does not include B at all in this selection. This provides the student with a frame of reference that is helpful during the early stages of note and rhythm learning.

In regards to meter, it is probable that playing in irregular meters is a fairly new concept for students playing Level 6 repertoire. Because the A section is notated in 5/8 time, it is important for the teacher to introduce the 5-beat metrical pattern in a variety of ways to help the student internalize the meter. First, the teacher and student could repeatedly count "1-2-3-4-5" aloud together, slightly emphasizing beat 1 with a stronger vocal inflection. This could initially be done with just the speaking voice and a slight nod of the head on beat 1. When this is comfortable, the teacher and student could then count out loud while taking one purposeful step on every beat 1 while they move around the room. Following this, the teacher could play the A section on the piano while the student continues to count aloud and step on every beat 1. Incorporating movement into musical learning allows students to experience new concepts in a concrete way, helping them to internalize, retain, and reinforce new material.

As a result of this piece being played almost entirely on the black keys, some passages require specific fingering to execute effectively. One such passage occurs in measures 9 through 12, which marks the beginning of the B section (Example 4.8). Because the melody in the right hand spans an expansive range and uses legato articulation, it is essential to institute reliable and

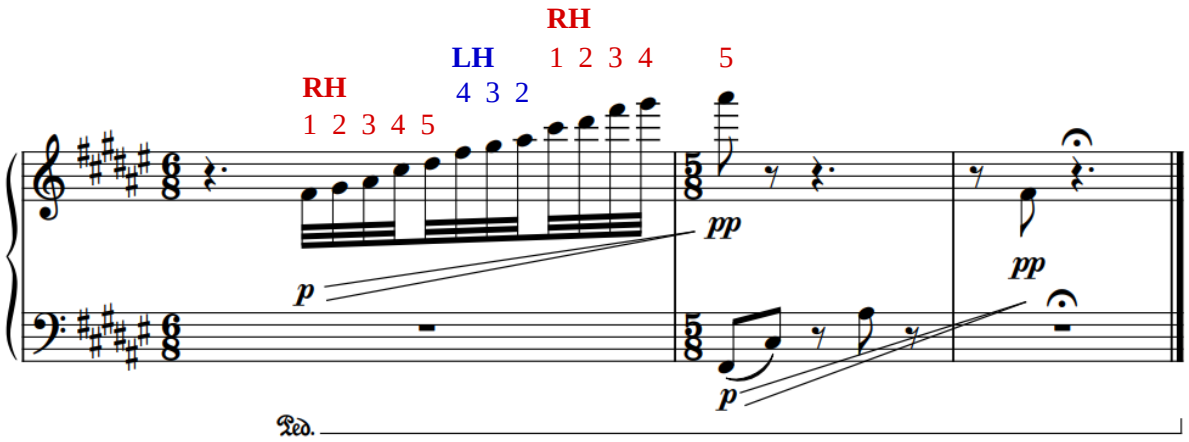
consistent fingering with the student early in the learning process. The suggested fingering presented in Example 4.8 adheres to Tanaka's slur markings in the right hand. This is accomplished by ensuring that the fingers can connect all the pitches underneath each slur without needing to physically pick up the hand and move to a new position.

Example 4.8: "Giant Panda," mm. 9–12 (Suggested Fingering for B Section)



Another passage that requires specific fingering occurs in the final three measures of the coda. Tanaka notates an ascending glissando on the black keys spanning two octaves (Example 4.9). Considering the gentle nature of this piece and Tanaka's instructions to start playing the glissando *piano* and decrease to *pianissimo*, it is imperative to select fingering that will produce a delicate, even, and seamless tone. The suggested fingering in Example 4.9 distributes the glissando between the hands using familiar fingering patterns. The right hand begins the glissando with fingers 1-2-3-4-5, continues with the left hand on a group of three black keys with fingers 4-3-2, and ends with the right hand again playing with fingers 1-2-3-4-5. Concluding the glissando with the right hand allows the left hand to move back down to the bass register for the final notes of the piece.

Example 4.9: “Giant Panda,” mm. 21–23 (End of Coda)



Note: In the published score, Tanaka notates only the first five pitches of the glissando and follows with the marking “gliss.” For the purposes of displaying the suggested fingering, the entire glissando has been notated here.

Children of Light

Title: Wild Water Buffalo

Level: 6

Tempo: *Calmly* (♩ = 60)

Meter: 3/4

Form: Ternary

Key Signature: 1 sharp

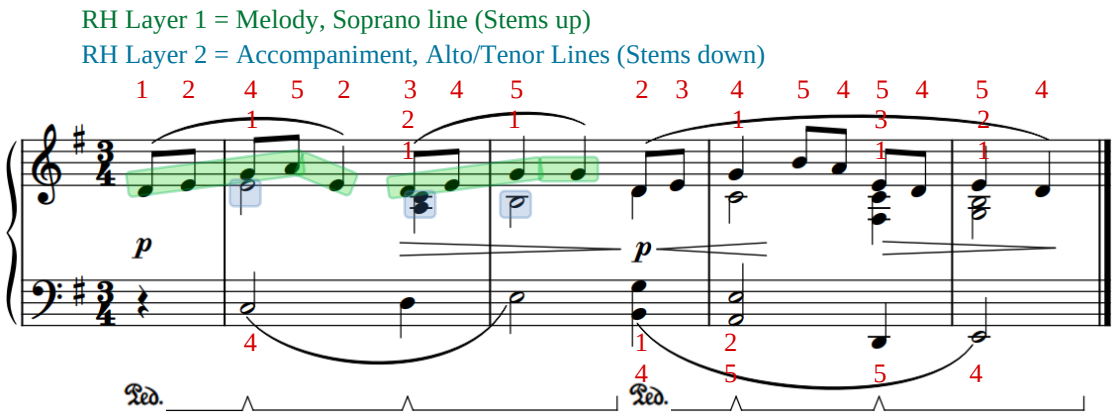
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Compositional Overview:

"Wild Water Buffalo" is a Level 6 piece with a gentle reverence and emotive character. It is one of the few selections in *Children of Light* that can be characterized as tonal, as the key of E minor is detected throughout the piece. Phrases are consistently four measures in length and provide a level of predictability and structural stability. With its chordal texture, detailed melodic shaping, and elegant lyricism, this piece can be characterized as neo-romantic in style.

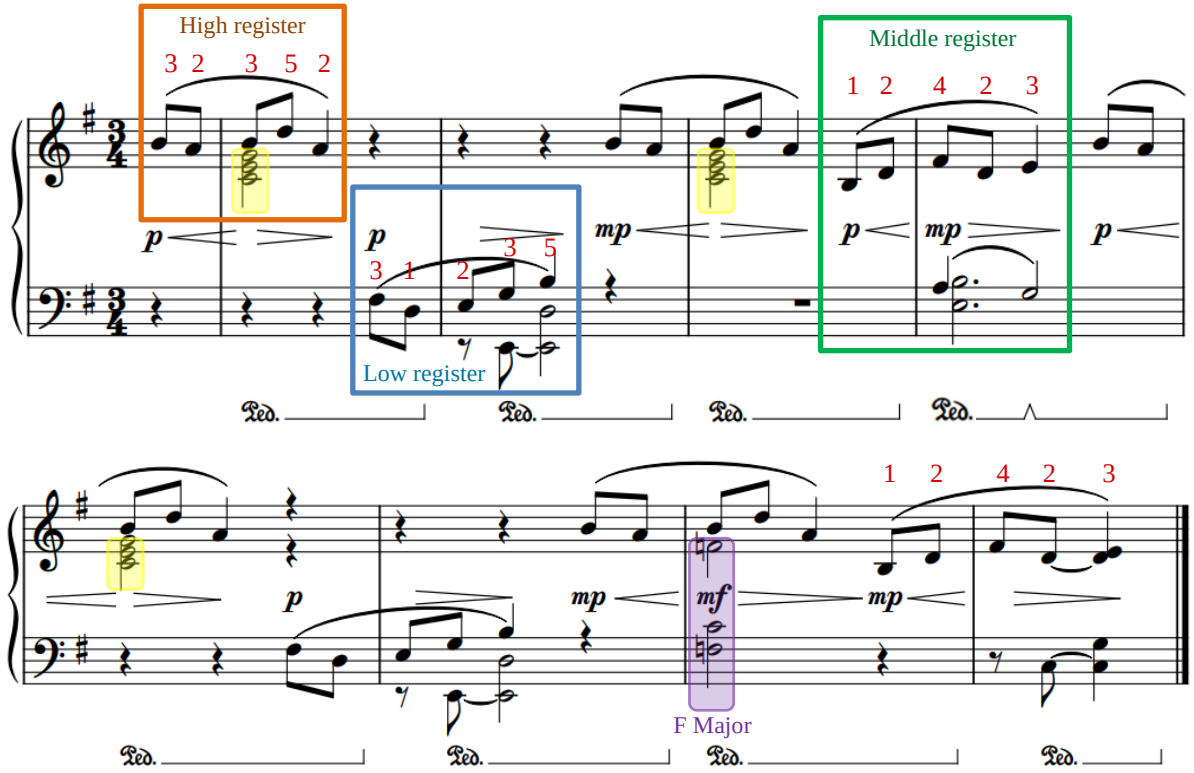
The A section features a hymn-like, homophonic texture with the melody in the soprano voice. In addition to the right hand playing this melodic line, it has a second layer designated as accompaniment. This second layer in the right hand includes the alto voice and often the tenor. However, the latter is occasionally played by the left hand with the bass line (Example 4.10).

Example 4.10: “Wild Water Buffalo,” mm. 1–4 (Beginning of A Section)



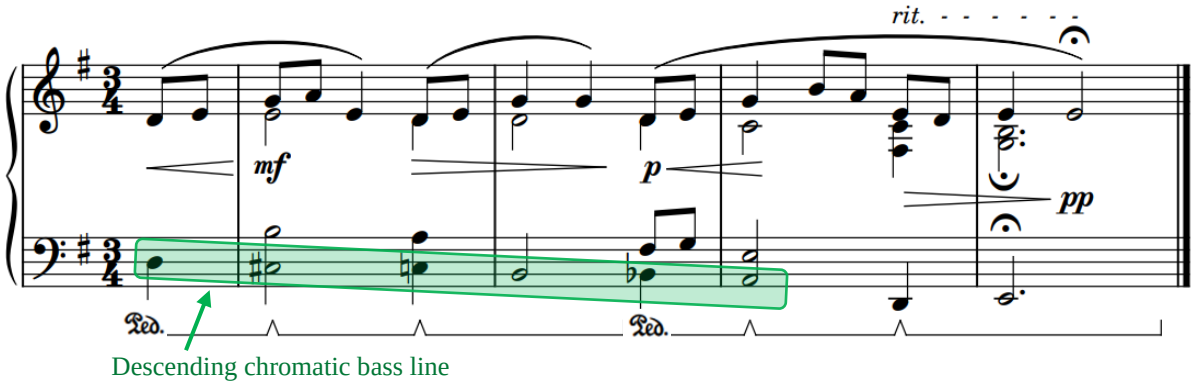
The B section is characterized by a consistent alternation of registers. This occurs every three beats, and both hands play in the same register simultaneously. The three registers include high, middle, and low. The high register is always stated first, followed by the low or middle registers (Example 4.11). This generates a sense of call and response that recurs throughout this section. While the melody of the high-register material remains the same in every iteration, Tanaka varies the dynamic and harmonic content. The most distinctive statement of the melody occurs in the fourth iteration. The three preceding iterations are harmonized with a C major triad (outlined in yellow), while the fourth is re-harmonized with an F major triad (outlined in purple). This is a striking harmonic shift in the key of E minor, and it is supported by a dynamic marking of *mezzo forte*, the loudest moment of this section.

Example 4.11: “Wild Water Buffalo,” mm. 9–16 (B Section)



Tanaka also utilizes the compositional technique of re-harmonization in the A’ section. Here, she uses chromatic alteration to achieve a descending chromatic bass line (Example 4.12). The incorporation of chromaticism produces additional harmonic tension, resulting in a stronger sense of pulling towards the final cadence of the piece.

Example 4.12: “Wild Water Buffalo,” mm. 24–27 (End of A’ Section)



Pedagogical Applications:

"Wild Water Buffalo" is a Level 6 piece with a chordal texture. This provides the opportunity to develop important reading, technical, and musical skills that are critical to the development of intermediate pianists. In terms of reading, the chordal texture in this selection helps to strengthen vertical reading skills, particularly by having the student identify similarities and differences between the harmonies in adjacent phrases and cadential patterns. Additionally, the student should watch the stem directions carefully in the B section. Due to the changes of register, the hands periodically play together in the same clef (refer to Example 4.11). In these instances, the upward stems are typically played by the right hand, and downward stems are typically played by the left hand.

From a technical perspective, the concept of voicing within a chordal texture is important to this selection. In the A section, the melody is played by the right hand in the soprano line. However, the right hand also plays a second layer of alto and tenor pitches that belong to the accompaniment (refer to Example 4.10). To ensure that the right hand voices the soprano line over the alto and tenor lines, the teacher could have the student practice playing all of the right-hand pitches, followed by releasing the alto and tenor in each chord while sustaining the soprano line. This will help the student grasp the physical sensation needed to apply more weight to the soprano line, as well as training the ear to recognize the melodic pitches within the chordal texture. This practice strategy can be extended to include the left-hand pitches. This results in each chord being played as written, followed by releasing the bass, tenor, and alto lines while sustaining the soprano. This will help students to establish an effective balance between melody and accompaniment, which in turn supports goal of voicing to the soprano line.

Musically, this piece is particularly useful for helping students develop maturity in shaping phrases. Tanaka notates an incredible amount of dynamic detail in the score. Each measure of the piece includes at least one dynamic marking, and often two or more. Additionally, nearly every musical phrase includes a set of hairpin dynamics, clearly indicating Tanaka's intentions for very specific phrasing (refer to Examples 4.10, 4.11, and 4.12). To help students play the beginning and end of each set of hairpin dynamics softly, the teacher could use words such as "sneaking in" and "sneaking out." In a complementary way, the teacher could use words such as "swell" or "go to here" to establish the focal point of each set of hairpin dynamics.

Children of Light

Title: **Coral Reef**

Level: 6

Tempo: *Lightly* (♩ = 114)

Meter: 3/4

Form: Through-composed with coda

Key Signature: None

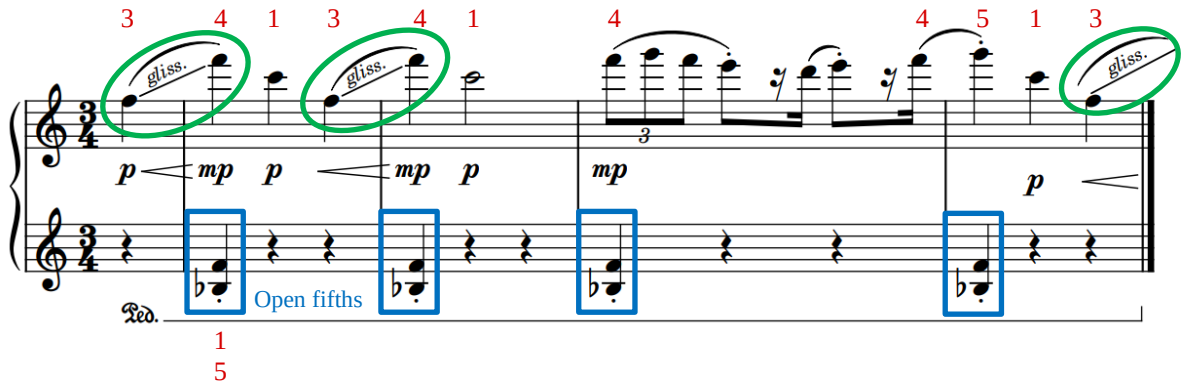
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Compositional Overview:

“Coral Reef” is a Level 6 piece that captures both the tranquility and excitement of discovering living things in the vast underwater world. The motive of the recurring glissando evokes a sense of sparkle and wonder that helps depict these sentiments through sound. This, along with an extensive use of the sustain pedal and an absence of traditional form, are reflective of an impressionistic style.

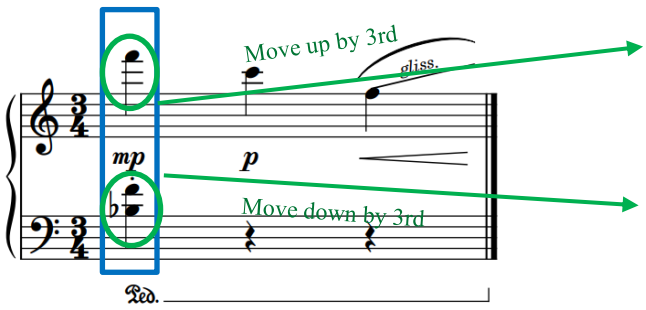
“Coral Reef” maintains a high level of consistency in its texture, rhythm, and intervallic content. In terms of texture, the active right-hand line alternates between one-octave glissandi and brief melodic figures, while the left hand provides a stable accompaniment consisting entirely of open fifths (Example 4.13). Rhythmically, the one-octave glissandi are paced to be played in one beat’s time. Additionally, the brief melodic figures in the right hand feature the same rhythm at each appearance. While these melodic figures are played in two different positions during the piece and are notated with extended ledger lines, their intervallic content remains the same.

Example 4.13: “Coral Reef,” mm. 1–4 (Main theme, B-flat as pitch center)

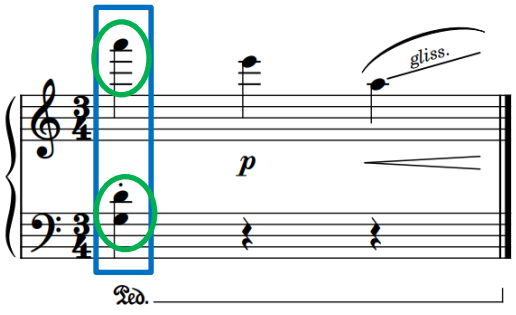


Because the glissandi and melodic figures alternate repeatedly throughout the piece, *Coral Reef* lacks a traditional form. However, Tanaka changes the harmonic material in measure 8 to suggest a loose sense of departure from the opening. Initially in measures 1 through 7, the pitches B-flat and F are used to create the open fifth in the left hand, and the pitch F serves as the first melodic note in the right hand (Example 4.14). When the pitches of the open fifth move down by a third in measure 8 to G and D, the melodic pitch instead moves up by a third to A (Example 4.15).

Example 4.14: “Coral Reef,” m. 1



Example 4.15: “Coral Reef,” m. 8



The resulting harmony is an open fifth with an added major second, a slight variation to the open fifth that sounds in measures 1 through 7. At the end of measure 18, a repeat sign creates a sense of return to the original harmonic material of the open fifth on B-flat and F. The coda brings the

most variety with its foreshortening of musical material and open fifths that jump to increasingly higher registers.

Pedagogical Applications:

As a Level 6 piece, the major note-reading challenge of “Coral Reef” is the extended ledger line notes found in the right-hand line. This occurs consistently throughout the piece, as the vast majority of right-hand pitches are notated above the staff. While this could appear daunting to the student, these brief melodic figures typically move in stepwise motion. Therefore, emphasizing the importance of reading notes intervallically is essential to overcoming this challenge.

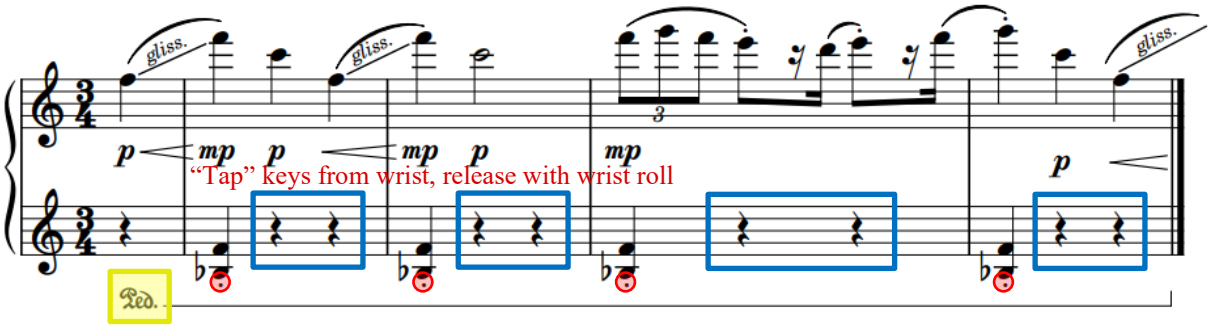
In terms of technique, the frequent glissandi in the right hand require careful planning and choreography. Each glissando is measured, lasting one beat in duration, and has a pitch range of one octave. Therefore, the first and last pitches of each glissando are specified, including glissandi from F5 to F6 and A6 to A7. As a result of their short duration and limited pitch range, it is important to execute the glissandi with a well-choreographed rotation of the wrist. It is recommended to play the glissando with the third finger, using the right corner of the nail to maintain contact with the keys. This angle of the hand results in the palm facing towards the left and slightly upwards. As the glissando ascends, the student can apply slight pressure to the third finger to help the wrist rotate counterclockwise while continuing to maintain contact with the keys. By the conclusion of the glissando, the wrist should have rotated enough for the palm to face downwards, allowing the fourth finger to articulate the top note of the glissando. Figure 4.1 illustrates this suggested choreography for the one-octave glissando technique.

Figure 4.1: “Coral Reef,” Demonstration of one-octave glissando technique



To prevent tension from building, it is also important to ensure that the left hand adheres to the rhythm and articulation of the open fifths as they appear in the score. The notation of the left hand consists of blocked open fifths played on beat 1 as quarter notes, followed by two quarter rests (Example 4.16). The addition of staccato markings below each open fifth further indicates Tanaka’s intention for the fingers to physically release the notes after playing. However, the sustain pedal continues to be held through the quarter rests, so it is possible that the student will be inclined to play the open fifths as dotted half notes, physically holding the notes down until the next downbeat. However, this invites the potential for the wrist to lock and tension to build in the neck and shoulder. To prevent this from occurring, the fingers could use a gentle “tapping” motion originating from the wrist to play the open fifths. Releasing the keys with a flexible wrist and a slight roll promotes continuous physical movement, which in turn releases tension in the neck and shoulders. This is essential for performing this piece with physical freedom and technical ease.

Example 4.16: “Coral Reef,” mm. 1–4 (A Section)



Children of Light

Title: Red-Faced Parrot

Level: 6

Tempo: *Gently* (♩ = 108)

Meter: 5/8

Form: Ternary + Coda

Key Signature: 2 flats

Pages: 2

Compositional Overview:

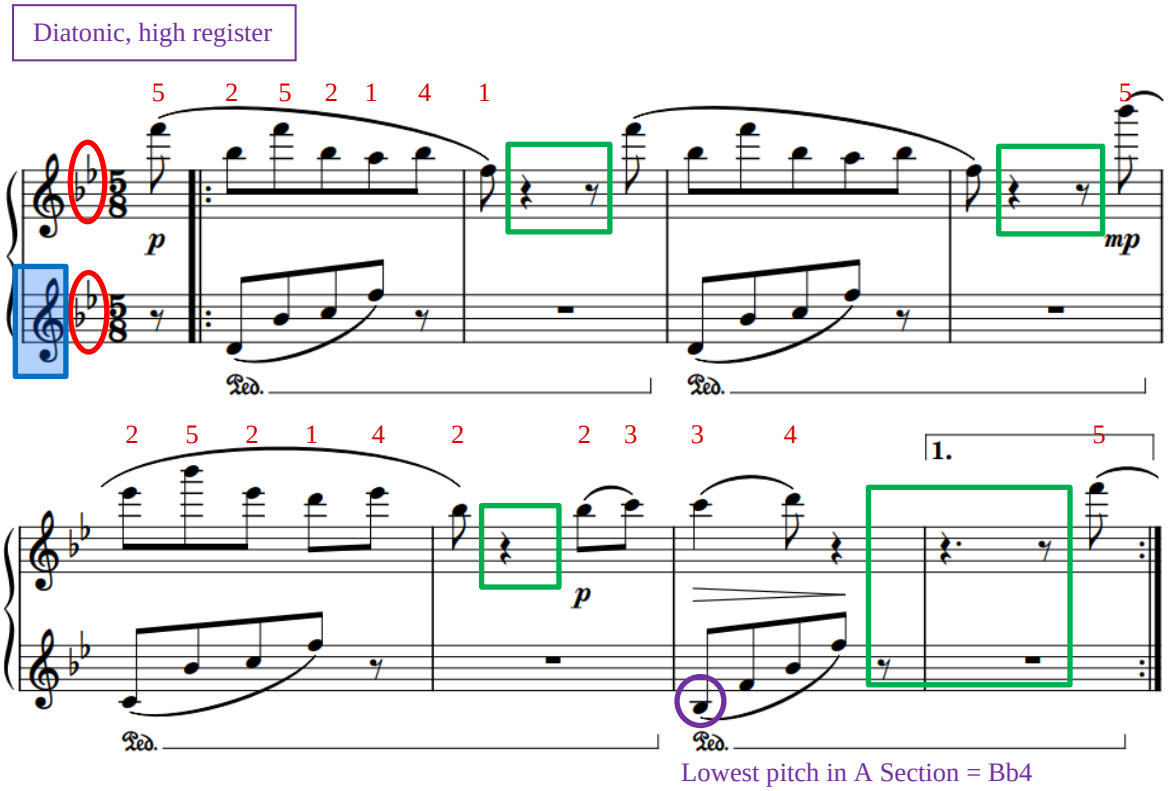
“Red-Faced Parrot” is a Level 6 piece that mimics birds soaring high above the forest canopy with its light, delicate, and airy sound. A thin, homophonic texture alternates with brief periods of rest, making this piece one of the clearest examples of the Japanese aesthetic of *ma* in the collection *Children of Light.*

Notated with a key signature of two flats, “Red-Faced Parrot” is centered around the pitch B-flat. This is evidenced by the B-flat major harmonies at the beginning of the A section and end of the coda, as well as the incorporation of purely diatonic pitches in these sections (Example 4.17). By contrast, the B section is characterized by chromatic wandering, as it moves through multiple pitch centers and accidentals in the span of twenty measures (Example 4.18).

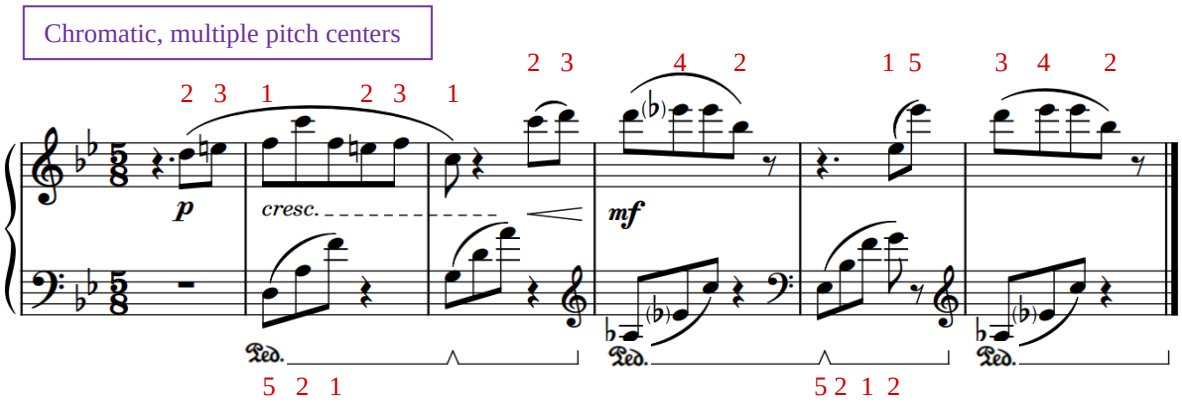
Tanaka utilizes multiple pitch elements to project the image of flying birds in this selection. Particularly in the A section and coda, both hands are notated in the treble clef, and the pitches of both hands in these sections are played at Bb4 and above (refer to Example 4.17). Additionally, both the right-hand melody and left-hand accompaniment feature widely spaced intervals, often including adjacent intervals of fourths, fifths, sixths, and sevenths. These larger

intervals create a sense of aural space, and when combined with a high registration, the result produces the image of birds in flight.

Example 4.17: “Red-Faced Parrot,” mm. 1–8 (A Section)



Example 4.18: “Red-Faced Parrot,” mm. 13–18 (B Section)



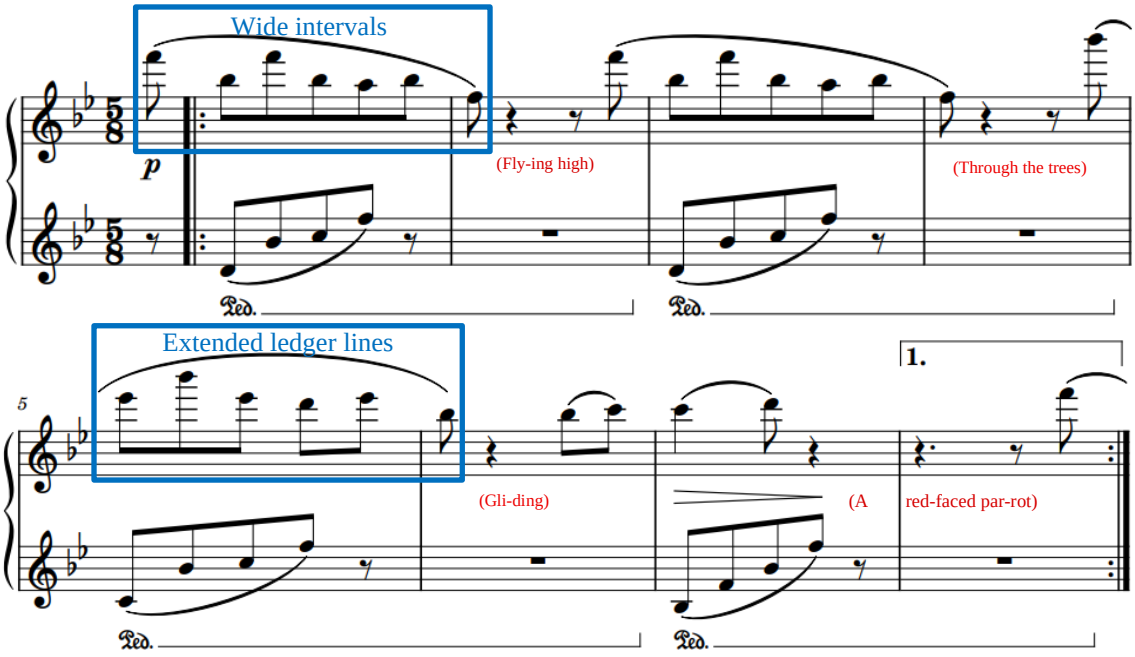
One of the most unique elements of “Red-Faced Parrot” is the way in which Tanaka plays with the concept of time. Not only is this selection composed in the irregular meter of 5/8,

it also includes brief periods of rest every few measures. This occurs particularly often in the A section, and the length of these rests vary slightly each time, which further distorts the listener's temporal perception (refer to Example 4.17). While these frequent yet brief periods of rest indicate an absence of pitch material played by either hand, Tanaka's pedal markings indicate the that sustain pedal continues to hold through these rests, resulting in the previous pitches continuing to sound through the rests. Tanaka uses this technique to create a sense of aural space throughout the piece. The alternation between active playing and passive rests represents a musical depiction of the Japanese aesthetic of *ma*, in which empty space (silence) holds equal importance to the artwork itself (sound).

Pedagogical Applications:

In terms of notation, this Level 6 piece "Red-Faced Parrot" frequently uses extended ledger lines, particularly in the right-hand line. It is important for the student not only to recognize instances of exact repetitions of pitch patterns, but also to identify the sequential passages. Doing so encourages an intervallic reading approach, which is particularly important in passages with wider intervals or extended ledger lines. The right hand in the A section of "Red-Faced Parrot" features both of these (Example 4.19). The melodic gesture in measure 1 is repeated in measure 3. However, rather than repeating the same pitches a third time in measure 5, Tanaka moves the melodic pattern up a perfect fourth while preserving the intervallic content. Identifying this as a melodic sequence helps train the student to read pitches as groups of notes rather than individual pitches, a critical skill for decoding extended ledger lines with efficiency.

Example 4.19: “Red-Faced Parrot,” mm. 1–8 (A Section)



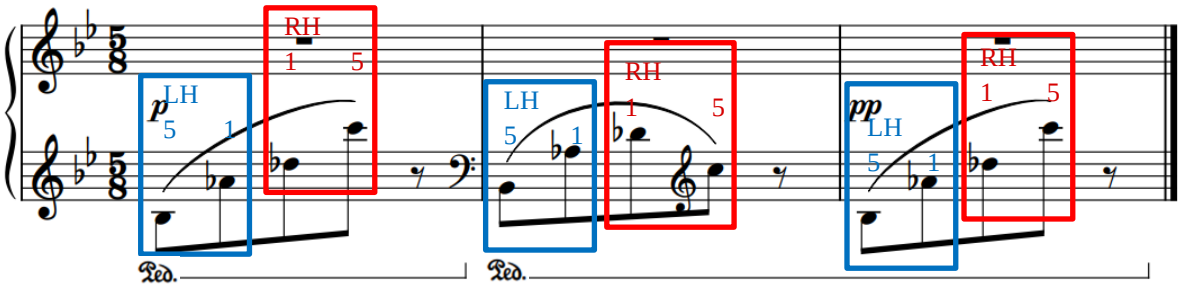
Rhythmically, it can be challenging for the student to count the rests precisely in this piece. This is attributed to both the irregular meter of 5/8 and the variable length of each rest. Depending on the age of the student, accuracy in counting can be approached in multiple ways. For older students, they may choose to simply count using numbers (ex. “1-2-3” in measure 2) or with a very subtle physical impulse, such as three quick, short inhales of the breath. For younger students, this can provide an opportunity for the teacher and student to create a narration for the piece to be chanted during the periods of rest. For example, in the A section, four periods of rest occur approximately every two measures. The number of beats of rest, in which neither hand actively depresses any keys, is as follows:

- Measure 2: Three beats of rest
- Measure 4: Three beats of rest
- Measure 6: Two beats of rest
- Measures 7-8: Five beats of rest

Using the number of beats of rest as a starting point, ask the student to brainstorm words (or multiple words) that have the same number of syllables as the beats of rest. Guiding the student to choose words that relate to the title of the piece is most effective, such as “fly-ing high” for three beats of rest and “a red-faced par-rot” for five beats of rest. A sample chant for the A section is provided in Example 4.19. Once the student has written their chant, notate the words in the score. This will allow the student to verbally chant these words while they practice, helping transform a challenging rhythmic passage into an engaging narration to accompany the piece.

In regards to technique, two principal strategies prove particularly helpful for executing the widely spaced intervals with delicacy and ease. Specifically in the left hand throughout the piece, adjacent intervals are often spaced the interval of a fifth or more apart from each other, making it inconceivable to play these passages from the fingers only. Therefore, flexibility of the wrists is of the utmost importance. This will allow the wrists to move in a lateral motion through each group of notes, encouraging the concept of one-gesture playing rather than playing note-by-note. In addition to using flexible wrists in a lateral motion, it is recommended to distribute the pitches of the left-hand accompaniment between the hands when it is possible. This strategy works particularly well in measures 26 through 28, the last few measures of the B section (Example 4.20). Because the right hand does not have anything to play in these measures, the left-hand gestures can easily be distributed between the hands, where the left hand plays the first and second pitches, and the right hand plays the third and fourth pitches. This avoids unnecessary finger crossings by the left hand in order to reach all four pitches.

Example 4.20: “Red-Faced Parrot,” mm. 26–28 (End of B Section)



Children of Light

Title: **Air**

Level: 6

Tempo: *Refreshingly, with a transparent sound* (♩. = 64)

Meter: 6/8

Form: Ternary + Coda

Key Signature: 2 sharps

Pages: 2

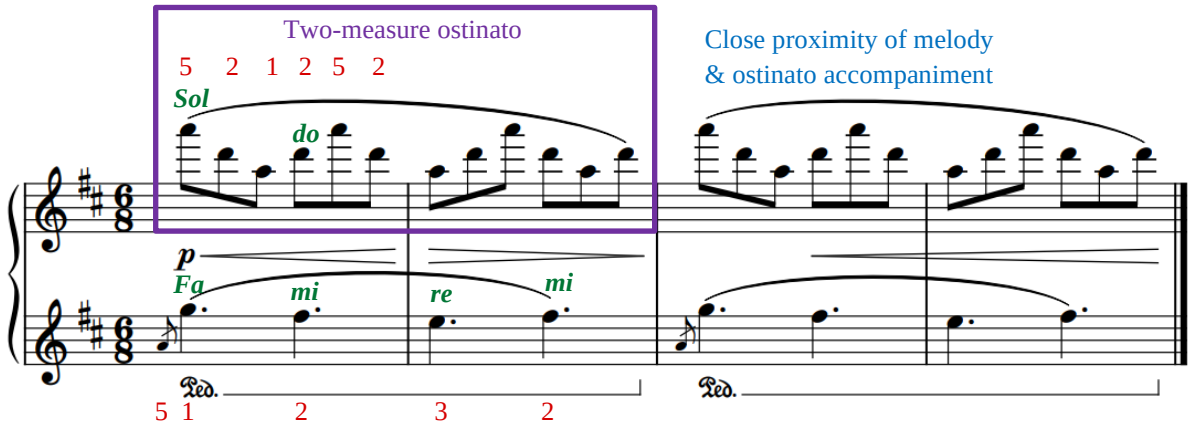
Compositional Overview:

"Air" is a Level 6 piece with an open, spacious sound that emulates the experience of being outdoors and breathing in the fresh air. The incorporation of grace notes, rolled chords, and ostinato accompaniment in a high register help to create a sense of wonder and peace in this selection. With its lyrical melodic lines, tonal harmonies within a non-tonal context, and consistent ostinato throughout, "Air" combines elements of neo-romanticism, French impressionism, and minimalism.

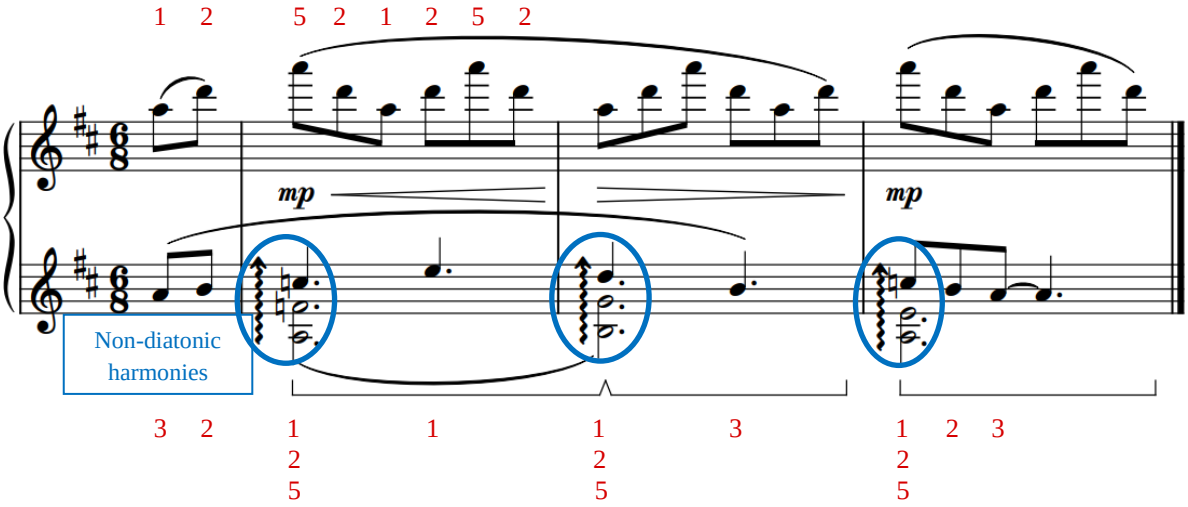
The backdrop of this piece is a two-measure ostinato played by the right hand that alternates between three pitches: A6, D6, and A7 (Example 4.21). Considering the key signature of two sharps, the pitches D and A used in this ostinato accompaniment suggest that D is the tonal center. While this is logical, the majority of the piece includes left-hand harmonies that are not diatonic to the key of D major, particularly in the B section (Example 4.22). Interestingly, Tanaka uses tonal harmonies throughout the piece in a non-tonal context. This is evidenced by the harmonic progressions that do not follow the traditional sequence of tonal music. For example, the triads in the first three measures of the B section are sequenced as follows: F major, G major, and A minor (refer to Example 4.22). While these chords are diatonic to the key of C

major (IV, V, and vi), there is no sense of C as a tonal center at any point in this section or any other section of the piece. Therefore, this harmonic progression is being used in a non-tonal context, even though these triads are tonal in of themselves.

Example 4.21: "Air," mm. 1–4 (A Section)



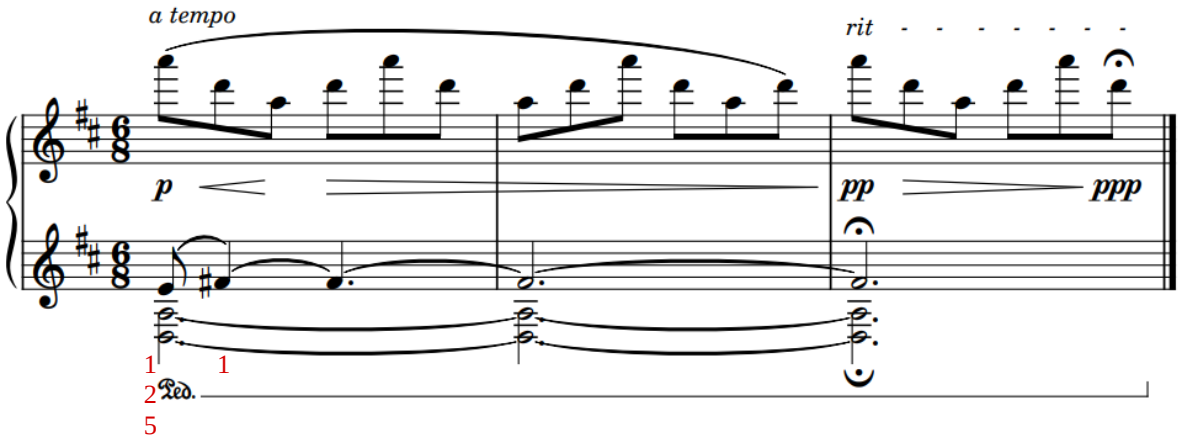
Example 4.22: "Air," mm. 14–18 (B Section)



While Tanaka's use of tonal harmonies in a non-tonal context can be considered a general trend in this piece, there are a few exceptions. The opening and closing measures both indicate a somewhat clear sense of D as a tonal center. In addition to the pitches D and A forming the ostinato, the first four measures feature the melody *fa, mi, re, mi* in the key of D major (refer to

Example 4.21). The initial dissonance created between the G in the melody *(fa)* and the A in the ostinato accompaniment *(sol)* is resolved in the following beat with F-sharp in the melody *(mi)* and D in the ostinato accompaniment *(do).* In the final three measures of the piece, the left hand ends the piece on a D major triad (Example 4.23). These exceptions are noteworthy, as Tanaka sets up the framework for a tonal context at the beginning and end of the piece, but none of the measures in between these opening and closing measures reinforce D, or any other pitch, as a tonal center.

Example 4.23: "Air," mm. 26–28 (End of Coda)



In terms of meter and texture, this selection is quite consistent. It is notated in the compound meter of 6/8 and remains in this meter throughout the entire piece. Texturally, the ostinato accompaniment is played continuously by the right hand, while the melody and supporting harmonies are played by the left hand. Rolled chords and grace notes are common in the left hand, and the top pitch of these chords belong to the melody. This distribution between melody, ostinato accompaniment, and further harmonic support remains consistent for the duration of the piece.

Pedagogical Applications:

One of the primary pedagogical goals of this Level 6 piece "Air" is to achieve an effective balance between the melody and accompaniment. This is particularly important for this selection because the ostinato accompaniment is in close proximity to the melodic material, as they typically sound less than an octave apart from each other in the A section (refer to Example 4.21). To successfully differentiate between these layers, the hands must play with distinctive touches. The continuous right-hand ostinato should serve as a distant backdrop for the piece. To achieve this effect, the right hand must maintain flexibility of the wrist so that it is free to gently move in a lateral motion. Additionally, the right-hand fingers could depress lightly, just beyond the escape point of the key. This should result in a light, airy, and delicate sound that produces a consistent, even tone at a soft dynamic level. By contrast, the melodic material in the left hand could be played further into the key, about halfway. A deeper key depth produces a more resonant sound, and when this is combined with an ultra-legato touch, it produces an effective balance between melody and accompaniment.

The rolled chords in the left hand require careful planning to execute with musical sensitivity. As the top pitch of each rolled chord is melodic, it must be voiced accordingly. The pitches of each rolled chord should be balanced using the following dynamic suggestions:

- Lowest pitch = least sound
- Middle pitch = moderate sound
- Highest pitch = most sound

In order to successfully balance the pitches of the rolled chords, it is helpful to utilize a specific wrist technique. This consists of two wrist movements that occur simultaneously. Due to the range of the rolled chords, which often spans the interval of a tenth or eleventh, it is advisable for the wrist to remain flexible and use a lateral motion. This will help students with smaller hands

to reach the three pitches in quick succession. The second suggestion for wrist movement relates to the height of the wrist. In order to achieve the desired balance of pitches as outlined in the list above, the student could alter the height of their wrist in the following manner:

- Lowest pitch = slightly lowered wrist
- Middle pitch = level wrist
- Highest pitch = slightly raised wrist

Raising the wrist slightly with each consecutive pitch ensures a gradual increase in sound, as more height creates more leverage, which results in a fuller sound. Utilizing these wrist techniques will help the student to perform the rolled chords with physical ease and musical maturity.

Children of Light

Title: Grevy's Zebra

Level: 6

Tempo: *Animatedly* (♩. = 156)

Meter: 9/8, 8/8

Form: Ternary + Coda (loosely)

Key Signature: None

Pages: 2

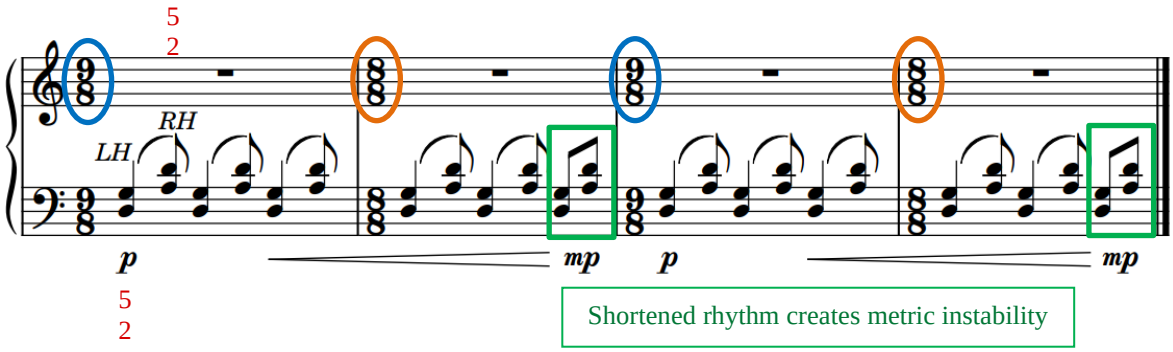
Compositional Overview:

"Grevy's Zebra" is a Level 6 piece with a jagged, edgy, and skittish sound. Its repetitive rhythms and consistently alternating meter emulate the clumsy movements of a zebra. With its absence of melody and the slight, periodic changes to the pitch content, this selection is the purest example of minimalism in *Children of Light.*

"Grevy's Zebra" features a considerable sense of momentum, which is generated from several factors. Metrically, this piece is highly irregular. While only the time signatures 9/8 and 8/8 are used throughout, they alternate nearly every measure of the piece. This trend is stated clearly in the first four measures of the piece (Example 4.24). The recurring rhythm fits naturally into the compound meter of 9/8 (♩♪). However, Tanaka applies this same rhythmic pattern to the measures in 8/8, resulting in the last beat being shortened to two eighth notes (♫), rather than one quarter note followed by an eighth note (♩♪). This produces metric instability, as one assumes the 9/8 meter established in measure 1 will continue until the two eighth notes at the end of measure 2 are heard, signaling a shift to 8/8. This metric ambiguity contributes significantly to the momentum of the piece with the immediate return to 9/8 and further alternation with 8/8.

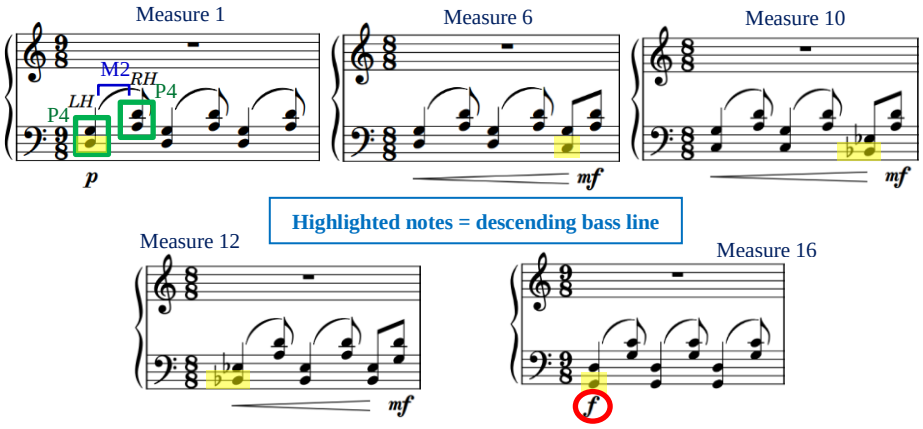
Additionally, the momentum is fueled by the exceptionally rapid tempo and frequent dynamic swells followed by sudden drops.

Example 4.24: “Grevy’s Zebra,” mm. 1–4 (A Section)



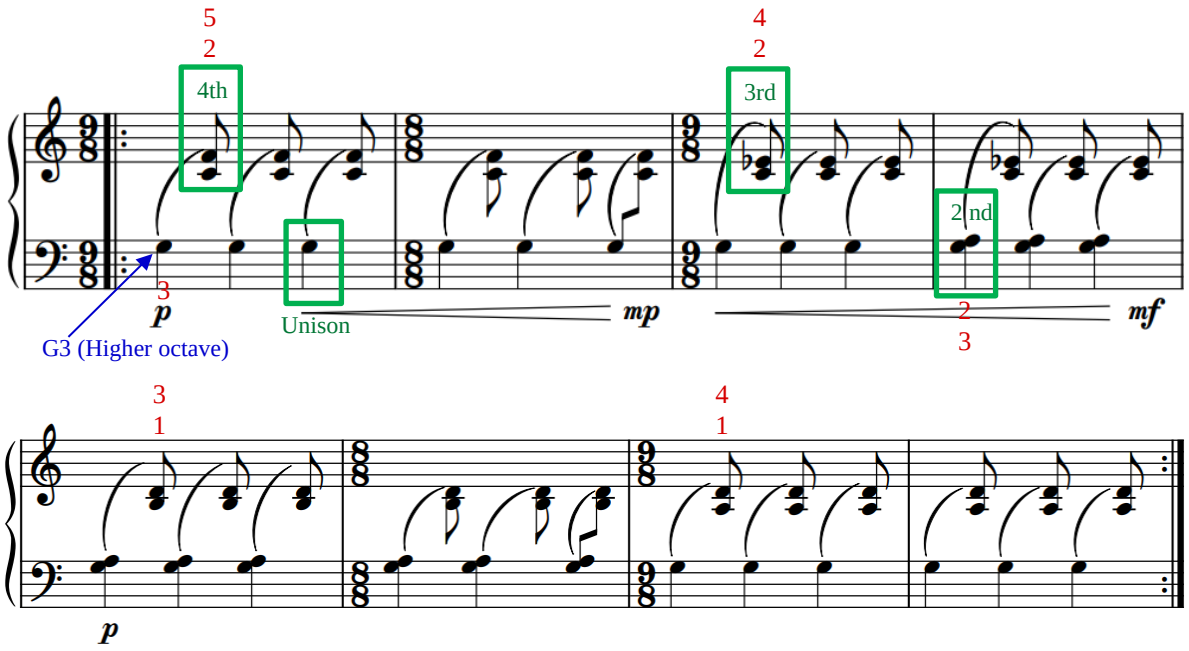
In terms of pitch, “Grevy’s Zebra” is a particularly unique selection. It is purely textural and contains no melodic content. The hands continuously alternate with each other using repetitive harmonic intervals. This begins in the A section with both hands playing perfect fourths in the bass register separated by a major second (Example 4.25). As the A section develops, Tanaka introduces very slight changes to the pitch content that primarily result in a descending bass line. This gradual descent leads to the climax of the piece on the downbeat of measure 16, where both hands reach a *forte* dynamic level.

Example 4.25: “Grevy’s Zebra,” mm. 1, 6, 10, 12, 16 (A Section)



The pitch content of the B section differs from the A section in two regards. While the A section is made up exclusively of fourths and fifths, the B section features smaller intervals, ranging from unisons to perfect fourths (Example 4.26). This is particularly true of the left hand, which only plays unisons and seconds throughout the B section. Additionally, these unison pitches are notated as G3, which is an octave higher than the G2 that sounds at the close of the A section. In this way, the B section features a somewhat higher register than that of the A section.

Example 4.26: "Grevy's Zebra," mm. 21–28 (B Section)

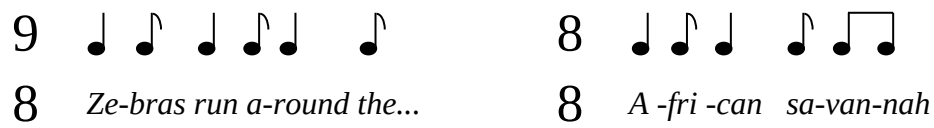


Pedagogical Applications:

Because of the constantly changing meter and brisk tempo of this Level 6 piece "Grevy's Zebra," it is essential to establish a strong sense of pulse and rhythm in the earliest stages of learning. When introducing this piece, the teacher could play the dotted-quarter note pulse on a hand drum while the student steps to it with the feet. Next, the teacher could introduce two chants to be spoken in rhythm: one for the measures in 9/8 and a second one for the measures in

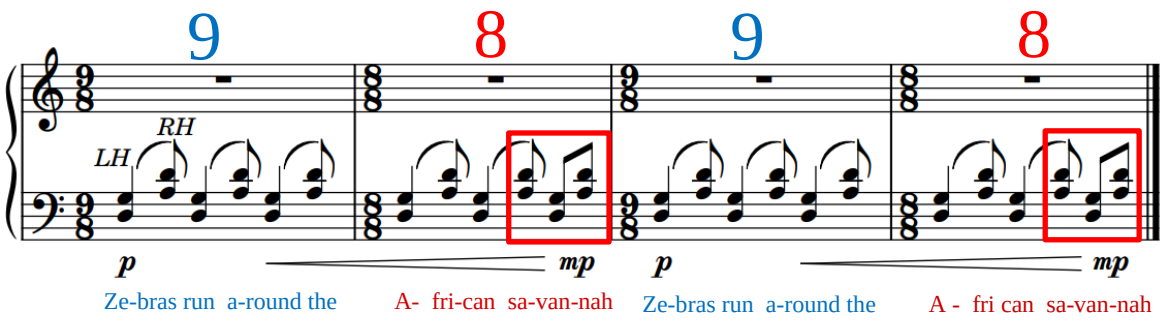
8/8 (Figure 4.2). While these two rhythms are very similar, choosing different chants will help students to "chunk" each measure by its meter, making the repetitive nature of the rhythmic material easier for the student to process.

Figure 4.2: "Grevy's Zebra," sample chants for rhythms in 9/8 and 8/8



While reciting the chants, the student should continue stepping to the dotted-quarter note pulse with the feet. To highlight the rhythmic diminution at the end of the 8/8 measures, three claps could be performed on the word "sa-van-nah," with the foot stepping on the second syllable of the word for the pulse. When the student can perform these chants and movements with ease, the next step is to chant and tap the rhythms with alternating hands, beginning with the left hand. It may also be helpful to write a large, color-coded "9" or "8" above each measure so that the student can easily determine which chant/rhythm to perform next (Example 4.27). This will become particularly useful in the B section, when the alternation of 9/8 and 8/8 becomes less predictable. These preparatory steps will help the student to perceive these rhythms in a larger context and provide a solid rhythmic foundation for the piece.

Example 4.27: "Grevy's Zebra," mm. 1–4 (A Section)



Regarding technique, it is essential for both arms to relax from the shoulder. This allows the keys to be depressed with the weight of the arms rather than the fingers. Because of the repetitive nature of the rhythm, arm weight is fundamental to executing this piece with minimal tension. Additionally, this piece features frequent dynamic swells followed by a sudden drop in dynamic level (refer to Example 4.24). To help execute these rapid dynamic changes, it could be useful to discuss the concept of key depths with the student. In this piece, four dynamics are present: *piano, mezzo piano, mezzo forte,* and *forte.* To help distinguish between these dynamic levels, the teacher could demonstrate what it looks and sounds like to depress a key at four corresponding key depths: the escape point, halfway and three-quarters into the key, and to the base of the key (Table 4.1).[99] Next, the student can experiment playing with these key depths, first with a single note and then using a five-finger pattern. Once the student is comfortable, this concept can be applied to the dynamics of this piece. Introducing key depths to the student is a concrete way to differentiate between dynamic levels, especially when they occur frequently and in quick succession.

Table 4.1: "Grevy's Zebra," dynamic levels with corresponding key depths

Dynamic Level	**Corresponding Key Depth**
Piano (p)	Escape point
Mezzo piano (mp)	½ into the key
Mezzo forte (mf)	¾ into the key
Forte (f)	Base of the key

[99] The current discussion of key depth refers to Joanne Haroutounian's perspective on this topic, as presented in her technique series *Palette of Touches: Intermediate Level* (San Diego, CA: Kjos Music Press, 2016), 5–6. While Table 4.1 suggests a precise correlation between a desired dynamic level and the key depth needed to achieve it, it is rather intended to provide teachers with a set of general guidelines to use when introducing or revisiting the connection between key depth and the dynamic level to students.

Children of Light

Title: **Kiwi**

Level: 6

Tempo: *With delight* (♩. = 120, ♩ = 180)

Meter: 6/8 (3/4), 10/8 (5/4)

Form: Binary + Coda

Key Signature: 1 sharp

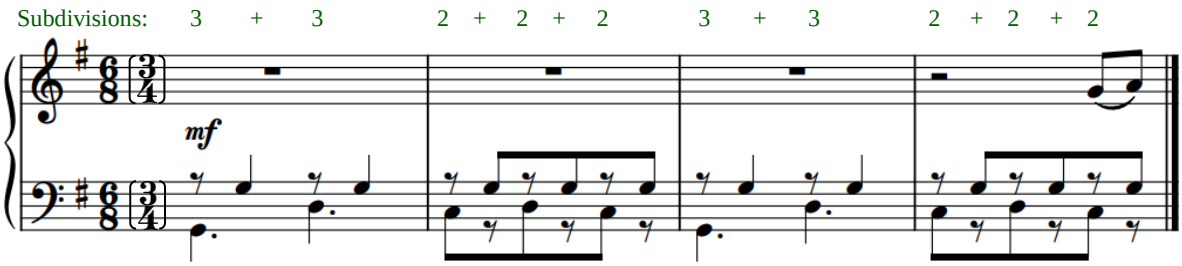
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Compositional Overview:

"Kiwi" is a Level 6 piece with a joyful, animated, and lighthearted flair that embodies the spirit of the kiwi bird. With its two-measure rhythmic ostinato accompaniment, G major tonality, and traditional phrase lengths, this piece features elements of minimalism and neo-classicism.

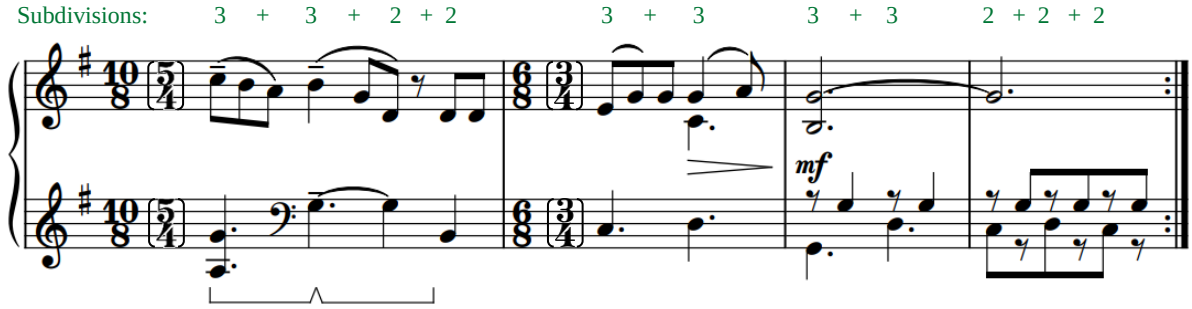
One of the most unique aspects of this piece is the way in which Tanaka plays with the meter. In measure 1, the time signature is notated as 6/8 with 3/4 in parentheses (Example 4.28). Upon examining the rhythm of the ostinato accompaniment, it becomes apparent that these two meters alternate every measure, beginning with subdivisions of three (6/8) in measure 1, followed by subdivisions of two (3/4) in measure 2.

Example 4.28: "Kiwi," mm. 1–4 (Beginning of A Section)



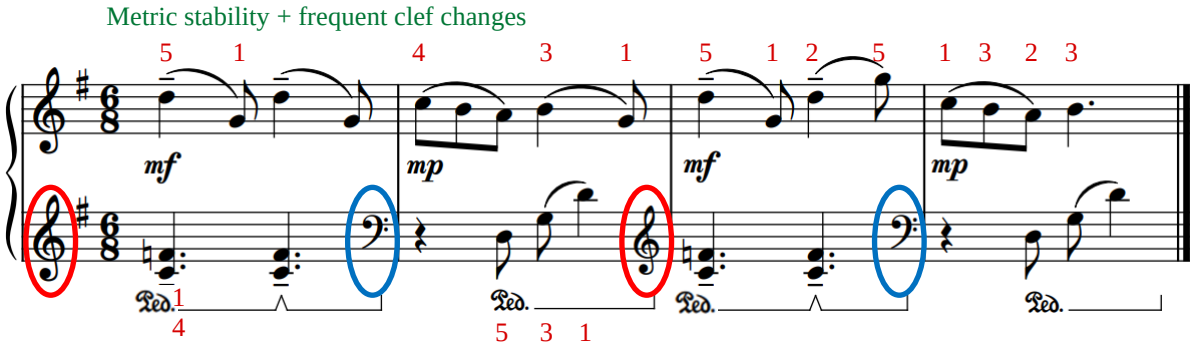
This alternation between triple and duple subdivisions continues throughout the A section, with the exception of the final four measures that precede the repeat sign (Example 4.29). Here, Tanaka inserts one measure of 10/8 with 5/4 in parentheses, followed by two adjacent measures of triple subdivisions and one measure of duple subdivisions. This departure from the initial alternation of triple and duple subdivisions every measure signals to the listener that the end of the A section is near.

Example 4.29: “Kiwi,” mm. 18–21 (End of A Section)



In contrast, the B section is metrically consistent, maintaining the meter of 6/8 in triple subdivisions throughout. This stabilization of meter helps to distinguish the B section from the A section. Interestingly, Tanaka pairs this metric stability with frequent clef changes in the left hand, which occur every measure (Example 4.30). This also differs from the A section, which is metrically unstable but maintains the left hand in the bass clef almost entirely. The juxtaposition of these compositional elements bring clarity to the structure and form.

Example 4.30: “Kiwi,” mm. 24–27 (Beginning of B Section)



While the fluctuation of metrical subdivisions is a contemporary compositional technique, the lengths of phrases and G major tonality of this piece reflect a more traditional approach. Tanaka organizes the phrase lengths in a “short-short-long” arrangement, a compositional technique that was regularly used in the Classical era. This is particularly apparent in the B section, which is comprised of three phrases that are divided into two, two, and four measures, respectively. In the A section, the phrases are divided into four, four, and nine measures. While it is more common for adjacent phrases to be four, four, and eight measures in length, Tanaka takes the concept of “short-short-long” and translates it into a contemporary context that reflects her own compositional voice.

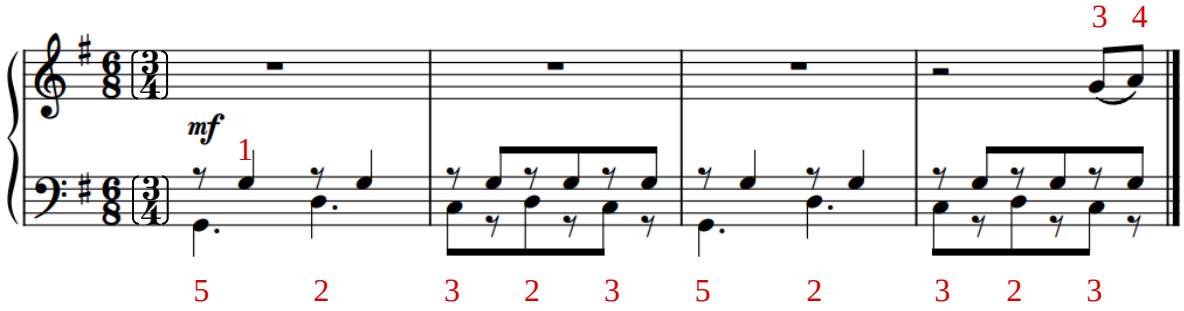
Pedagogical Applications:

In the earliest stages of learning this Level 6 piece “Kiwi,” it is important to gain security in the rhythm and constant shifting between meters. This can be achieved by counting the rhythm of the ostinato accompaniment out loud. Initially, it could be helpful to count every macrobeat as a group of two or three. For example, the opening four measures could be counted in the following way (refer to Example 4.28): 1-2-3 1-2-3 | 1-2 1-2 1-2 | 1-2-3 1-2-3 | 1-2 1-

2 1-2. When the student has mastered speaking these counts out loud, they could tap and count the left-hand rhythm with alternating hands. This will help to distinguish between the lower and upper voices of the ostinato accompaniment. As the student transfers to playing and counting the ostinato exclusively with the left hand, it is essential to emphasize the importance of the macrobeats, as they can serve as anchor points. A sense of feeling grounded on these beats will allow the varying subdivisions to more easily lock into place.

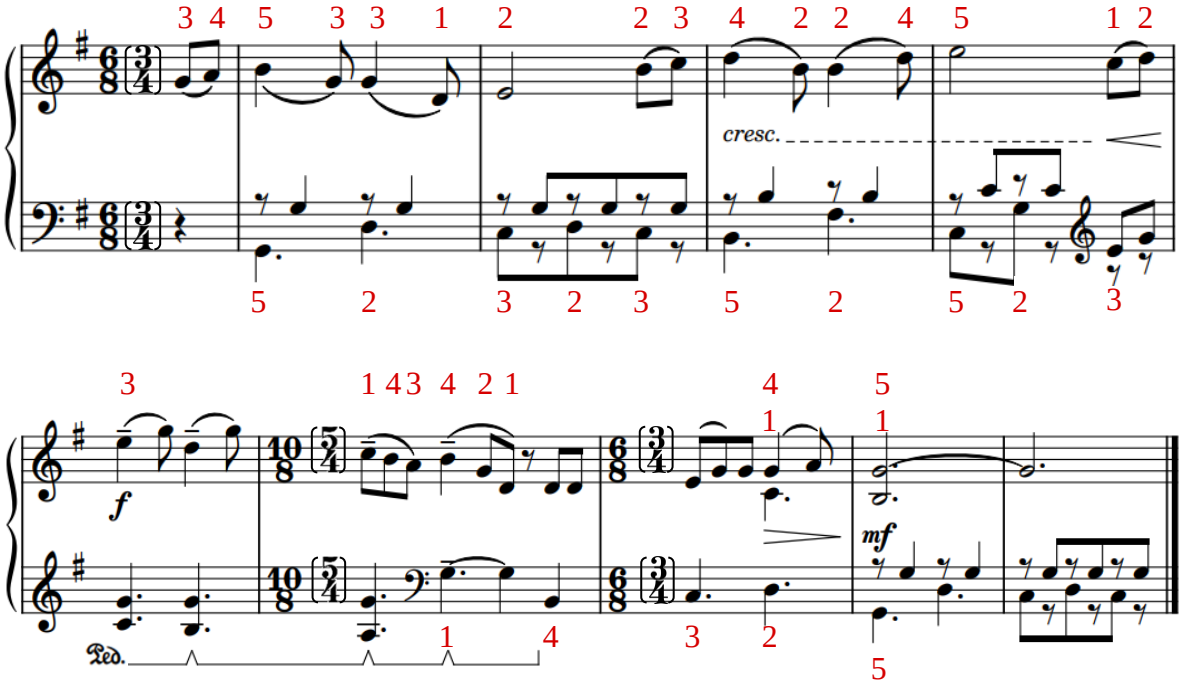
In terms of technique, it is essential to keep the shoulder relaxed so that the weight of the arm can drop into the bass line with ease. To accomplish this, the student could practice the bass line of the ostinato accompaniment alone, temporarily eliminating the upper pitch (G3). With decisive fingering, the pitches of the left hand can fit into one playing position, without needing to move around the keyboard (Example 4.31). Maintaining one position also helps to transfer the arm weight effectively between fingers, resulting in a consistent tone quality. Once the left hand can play the bass line with a relaxed weight of the arm, the upper pitch (G3) can be incorporated. In order to keep the character lighthearted and joyful, the thumb should play G3 very lightly on the corner of the fingernail, using a gentle, tapping motion. This will also help to voice the moving bass line over the repeated-note figure, bringing more clarity and balance to the layers.

Example 4.31: “Kiwi,” mm. 1–4 (Beginning of A Section, suggested fingering)



To achieve fluency and flow throughout this piece, it is necessary to make decisive choices in regards to fingering. In addition to the suggested fingering for the left-hand ostinato accompaniment, it is also beneficial to recommend fingering suggestions for the last phrase of the A section. This phrase is the only point in the section that the left hand moves out of the ostinato accompaniment position. It also involves the right hand moving through several position changes in somewhat quick succession. Considering these factors, specific fingering decisions prove helpful (Example 4.32).

Example 4.32: “Kiwi,” mm. 13–21 (End of A Section, suggested fingering)



Chapter 5: Upper-Intermediate Pieces (Level 7)

Chapter 5 contains five selections from *Children of Light*. Comprised of pieces designated as Level 7, these works can be classified as upper intermediate-level repertoire. They are comparable in difficulty to J.S. Bach's easiest *Two-Part Inventions* and Friedrich Kuhlau's *Sonatinas, Op. 55.*[100] In increasing level of difficulty, titles to be discussed in this chapter include:

- Black Rhinoceros
- Blue Whale
- Chinese Alligator
- Northern Lights
- Mountain Gorilla

[100] Magrath, *Piano Literature for Teaching and Performance,* xv.

Children of Light

Title: **Black Rhinoceros**

Level: 7

Tempo: *Energetically* (♩ = 148)

Meter: 4/4, 2/4, 7/8

Form: Ternary + Coda

Key Signature: None

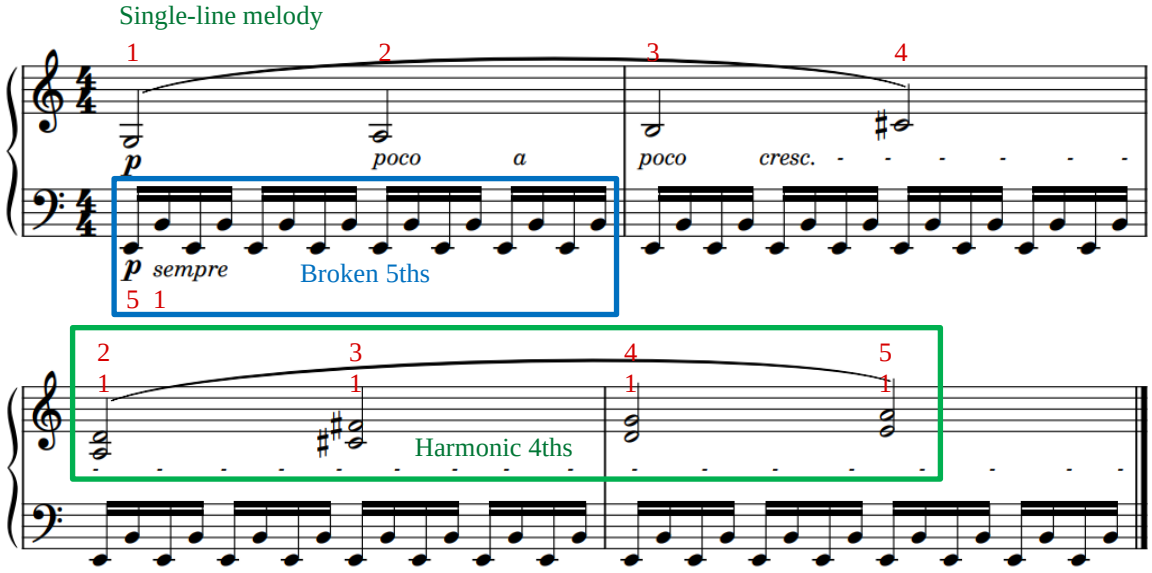
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Compositional Overview:

"Black Rhinoceros" is a Level 7 piece with an angsty, edgy, and driving character. With its rhythmically active accompaniment, frequent and jagged accent marks, and rapid dynamic swells, this piece evokes the image of a rhinoceros charging aggressively. The repetitive nature of the accompaniment reflects an element of minimalism.

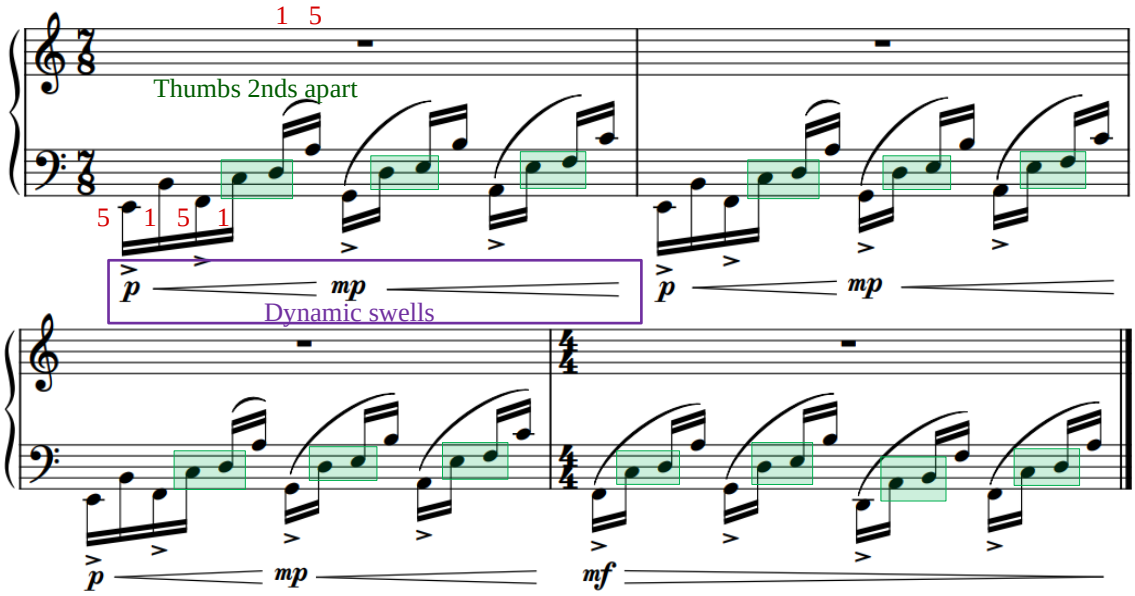
In terms of pitch, this piece is based primarily on the intervals of a fourth and fifth. The left hand exclusively plays broken perfect fifths throughout. In the A section, the left hand hovers on the pitches E and B, shifts briefly to F and C, and then returns to E and B. The right hand features a slowly ascending melodic line, first as a single note, and then in harmonic fourths (Example 5.1). Halfway through the A section, the right-hand line begins to descend in fourths, eventually reaching one and a half octaves lower than its highest point.

Example 5.1: “Black Rhinoceros,” mm. 3–6 (A Section)



The B section is defined by a pattern of broken fifths alternating between the hands. Most of this section is in 7/8, and the left hand begins playing two consecutive broken fifths, followed by alternation between the hands. As the pitches ascend by steps, the spacing between the hands remains constant. The thumbs are separated by the interval of a second, consistently playing on two adjacent white keys throughout the B section (Example 5.2).

Example 5.2: “Black Rhinoceros,” mm. 14–17 (Beginning of B Section)



Tanaka uses tempo, meter, and dynamic changes to mimic the erratic movements of a charging rhinoceros. In addition to the continuous sixteenth notes sounding at a rapid tempo (♩ = 148), this piece also features mixed meter. The A section is predominantly in 4/4 with a brief shift to 2/4, while the B section is primarily in 7/8 with two brief shifts to 4/4. The dynamic markings, particularly in the B section, are rough and edgy. Most often, dynamic swells occur every measure, followed by a sudden drop on the following downbeat (refer to Example 5.2). This trend continues throughout the B section, creating a sense of push and pull that alters the intensity of the character.

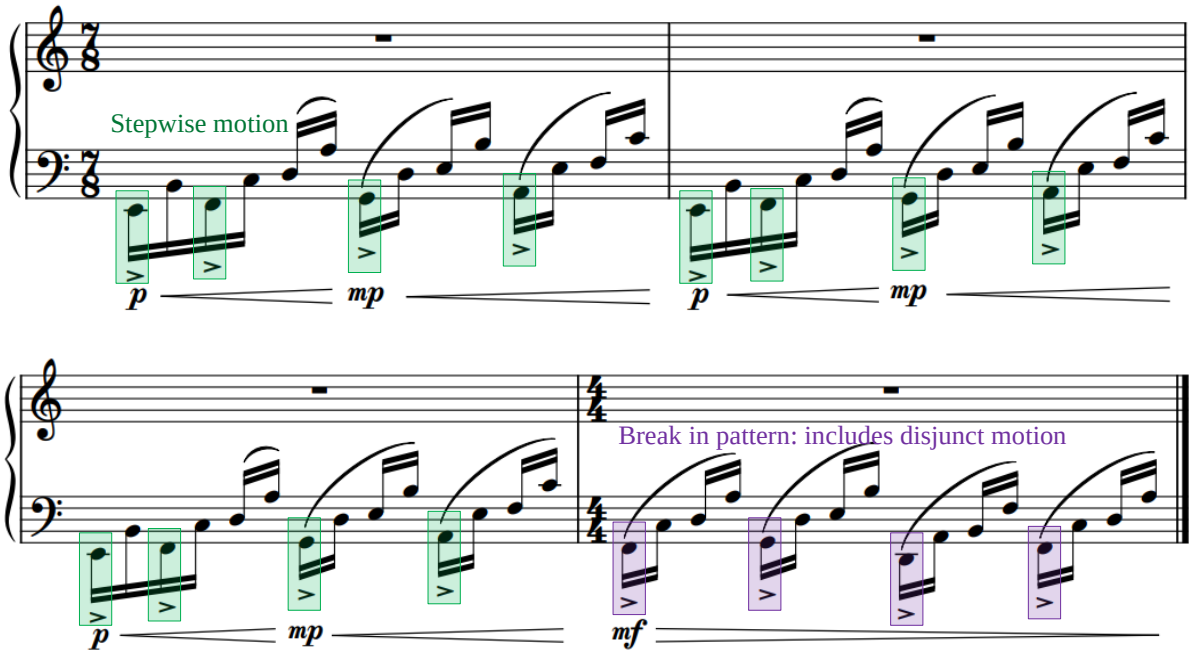
Pedagogical Applications:

The most fundamental technical goal of this Level 7 piece "Black Rhinoceros" is to maintain physical relaxation throughout. As the left hand constantly plays broken fifths at a rapid tempo, it is essential to establish an effective playing technique that allows the wrist and hand to remain as loose and relaxed as possible. This can be achieved through wrist rotation using slight, continuous supination and pronation of the forearm. This creates a motion that is similar to turning a doorknob. Equally important to wrist rotation is ensuring that the shoulder and neck muscles are relaxed. As these muscles initiate the entire playing apparatus, they must be free of tension for the forearm and wrist to follow through. Playing with relaxation will also help the student to use arm weight effectively, which is essential for quality tone production.

In terms of note-reading, the B section can be introduced by having the student track the movement of the bass line with the eyes. It will become evident that the left hand continually moves up by a step in each measure of 7/8 (Example 5.3). Accent marks are notated under every pitch of the bass line, making it easier to visually identify the stepwise movement. This pattern is

briefly interrupted by disjunct motion when the meter changes to 4/4 for one measure (m. 17). It is helpful for the student to identify that the change in the pattern aligns with the change in meter. Color-coding the stepwise and disjunct motion could help the student to easily identify where the change occurs. It is also important for the student to discover that the thumbs always play on adjacent white keys. This realization helps to reinforce note-reading by recognizing that when the bass line steps up, the right-hand pitches step up, as well. Throughout the B section, this spacing between the hands is always maintained, making it a particularly useful reading strategy during the early stages of learning.

Example 5.3: “Black Rhinoceros,” mm. 14–17 (Beginning of B Section)



Executing the dynamic detail of the B section requires thoughtful planning and practice. The rapid pacing of dynamic swells followed by sudden drops lends itself well to using various key depths. As discussed in the pedagogical applications of “Grevy’s Zebra” (refer to Table 4.1), it is important for the student to understand that a key can be depressed using a variety of key

depths. Playing a key just enough for it to sound is referred to as the escape point. It is also possible to play halfway and three-quarters of the way into the key, as well as at the base of the key. Each of these four key depths can produce a different dynamic level. Playing the least amount into the key produces the softest sound, and playing the deepest into the key produces the loudest sound. This systematic approach provides a concrete way for the student to understand how the physical action of depressing a key can create a wide range of dynamic contrasts.

Children of Light

Title: **Blue Whale**

Level: 7

Tempo: *Mysteriously* (♩ = 58)

Meter: 3/4

Form: Through-composed

Key Signature: 1 flat

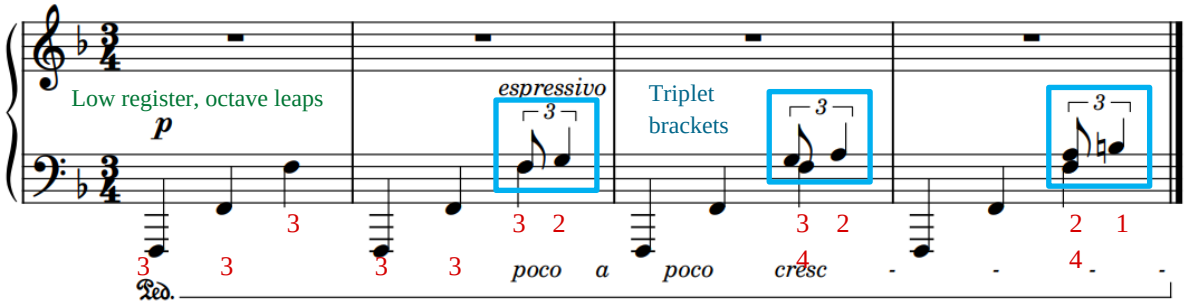
Pages: 3

Compositional Overview:

"Blue Whale" is a Level 7 piece with a spacious, deep, and open sound that emulates the slow movements of the blue whale and tranquility of the deep ocean. The expansive range of the accompaniment and generous use of the sustain pedal reflect both the Japanese aesthetic concept of *ma* and elements of French impressionism.

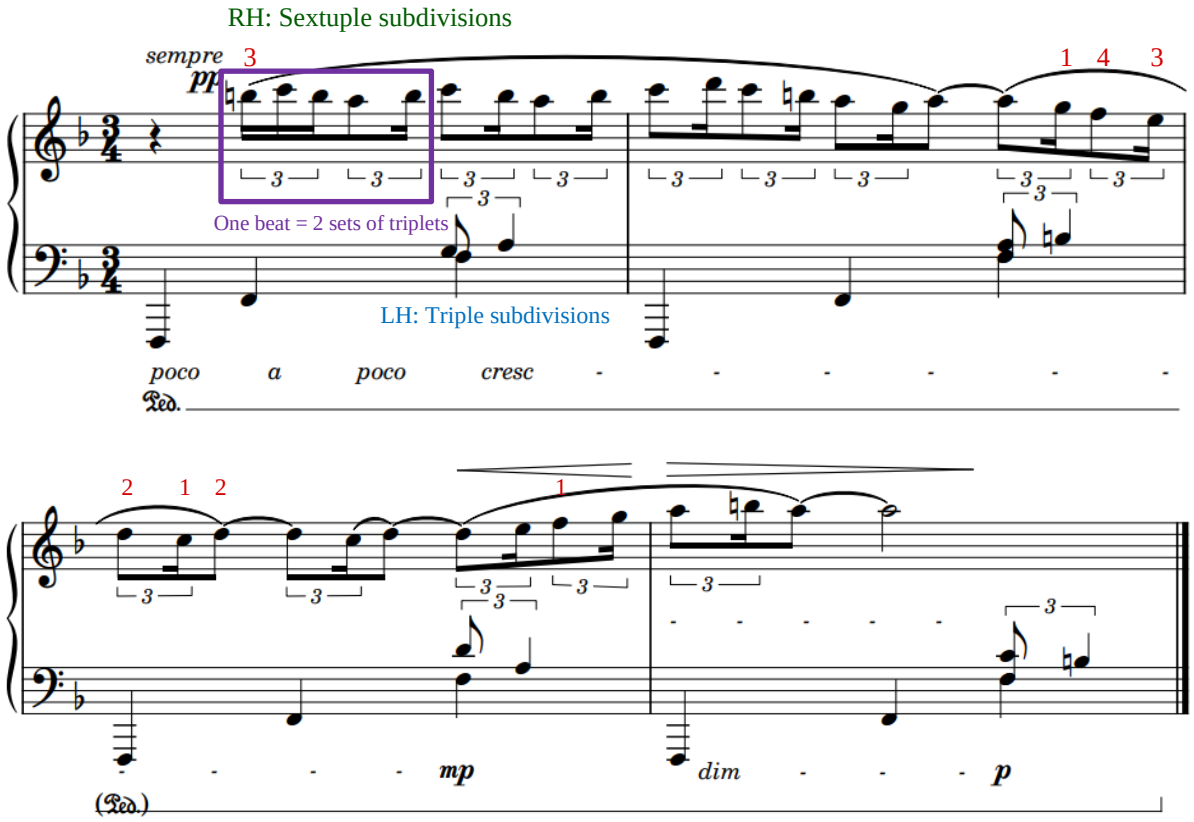
Throughout the piece, Tanaka creates a sense of space in the sound. One way she achieves this is through the pitch content and range. The left hand consistently plays in a considerably low register, specifically with the pitches F1 and F2, which sound respectively as quarter notes on beats 1 and 2 of every measure (Example 5.4). Not only is this a low register, but the pitches leap up at least one octave from beats 1 to 2 and from beats 2 to 3. This occurs every measure throughout the piece. The combination of a low register with large leaps creates a considerable sense of space. In contrast to the left-hand material, the range of the right-hand pitches is consistently high, as it spans from C5 to D7 and primarily plays in stepwise motion. These extreme registers between the hands, when combined with the octave leaps in the left hand and very slow performance tempo, create a considerable open and spacious sound.

Example 5.4: “Blue Whale,” mm. 1–4 (Opening)



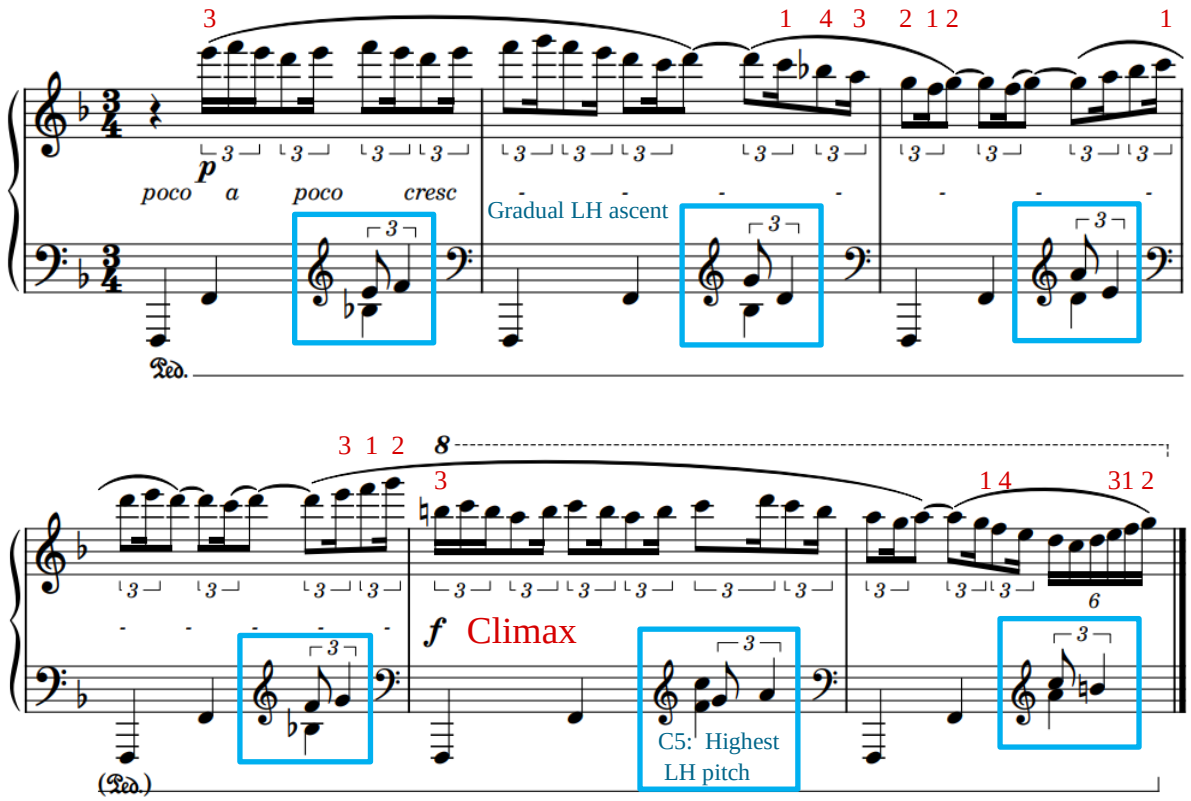
Rhythmically, this piece features several unique elements. Although the time signature is notated as 3/4 throughout, there are no occurrences of duple subdivisions in eighth notes. Rather, the left hand maintains triple subdivisions, while the right hand maintains sextuple subdivisions. The piece begins with a seven-measure introduction of the left hand alone, so the sense of triple subdivisions is established by the rhythm that occurs on beat three. This consists of one eighth note followed by one quarter note, which are grouped together with a triplet bracket (refer to Example 5.4). Beginning in measure 8, the right hand plays a stepwise figuration in a somewhat intricate rhythmic pattern. While the left hand subdivides the quarter-note pulse into three, the right hand subdivides it into six. This equates to the right-hand notation showing two sets of triplets per each quarter-note pulse (Example 5.5). Because six is a multiple of three, the rhythmic subdivisions of each hand align with each other. This is particularly relevant on beat 3 of each measure, when both hands play on the first and third subdivisions of the beat.

Example 5.5: “Blue Whale,” mm. 8–11 (Entrance of RH line)



To build towards the climax of the piece, Tanaka varies the left-hand pitch material. It has already been established that the pitches F1 and F2 are played respectively on beats 1 and 2 of every measure. However, the pitch material on beat 3 consistently changes. In the opening measures, the pitch material on beat 3 is notated in the bass clef with a combination of the pitches F3, G3, A4, and B4 (refer to Example 5.4). As the piece continues, the register of the pitch material gradually ascends, eventually enough that the pitches on beat 3 are notated in the treble clef. This gradual ascent continues with a steady crescendo until the climax of the piece is reached in measure 17 (Example 5.6). Here, the highest left-hand pitch, C5, is heard for the first time. As the piece moves past the climax and comes to a close, the pitch material on beat 3 descends to the original register of the opening measures. Through gradual registral and dynamic changes, Tanaka creates an effective focal point for the piece.

Example 5.6: “Blue Whale,” mm. 13–18 (Build to climax)



Pedagogical Applications:

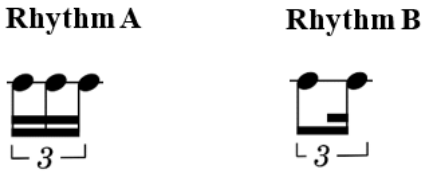
The fundamental component of this Level 7 piece “Blue Whale” is to execute both hands with rhythmic integrity. This begins with establishing a very strong sense of pulse in the opening measures of the left hand (refer to Example 5.4). To accomplish this, the student could silently “sing” inside the head the rhythm that occurs on beat 3. This will help to set the tempo of the quarter-note pulse while internalizing the triple subdivisions. This should occur before any notes are played on the piano. Doing so will help the student to play with a strong, steady pulse from the first note and eliminate the temptation to rush the quarter notes on beats 1 and 2.

When the right-hand figuration enters in measure 8, it is necessary for the quarter-note pulse to transition from triple to sextuple divisions (refer to Example 5.5). To set up this change,

the student can subdivide each eighth-note triplet into two parts. This internal shift in subdivisions could begin in measure 7, the measure before the right hand enters. This will give the student a chance to internalize the new subdivision before it needs to be played.

At a quick glance, the right-hand rhythm appears to be intricate and complex. While it does contain a considerable amount of detail, it can be condensed into two fundamental rhythmic patterns: a sixteenth-note triplet and an eighth note and sixteenth note bracketed as a triplet (Example 5.7). These rhythms will be referred to as Rhythm A and B, respectively. Rhythm A appears five times total throughout the piece, and each instance occurs at the beginning of a phrase. The remainder of each phrase consists of several repetitions of Rhythm B, a "long-short" rhythmic pattern that the student will recognize from previously studied repertoire.

Example 5.7: "Blue Whale," Right hand rhythmic patterns



The rhythmic relationship between the hands remains consistent throughout the piece. On beat 3, the right hand performs two iterations of Rhythm B, while the left hand performs the eighth and quarter-note triplet notated in Example 5.5. It is important for the student to identify the microbeats in which both hands play together. On beat 3 of each measure, the hands play together on the first and third microbeats. In other words, the left hand plays the first iteration of Rhythm B together with the right hand. Breaking down these visually complex rhythms into manageable units allows the student to decode the rhythms with ease and efficiency.

Considering the rhythmic detail and length of the right-hand phrases, it is important to establish decisive fingering in the early stages of learning. These right-hand figurations feature exclusively stepwise motion that require periodic finger crossings to reach all of the pitches. In contrast, the left hand plays considerably less notes with leaps of an octave or more from one beat to the next. While beats 1 and 2 of the left hand could be played with fingers 5 and 1 respectively, an alternative option could be to play both beats with the third finger. This would allow for a strong, reliable finger to create a consistent, round, and open tone quality. This effect would help to create a depth to the sound that would evoke the sense of being underwater, deep in the ocean. Fingering suggestions for this piece are included in Examples 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6.

Children of Light

Title: **Chinese Alligator**

Level: 7

Tempo: *Humorously* (♩. = 60)

Meter: 6/8, 3/8, 9/8

Form: Through-composed

Key Signature: 1 flat

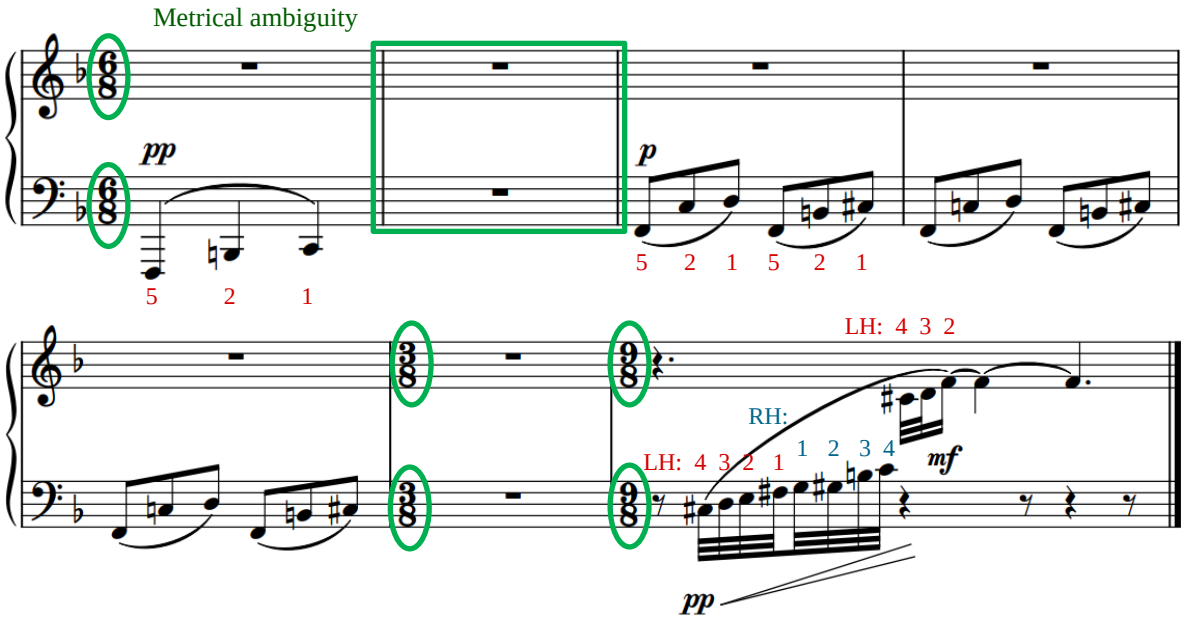
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Compositional Overview:

"Chinese Alligator" is a Level 7 piece with a subtle sense of humor and an eccentric flair. With its extensive chromaticism, dissonant intervals, and mixed meter, this is the purest example of modernism in *Children of Light.*

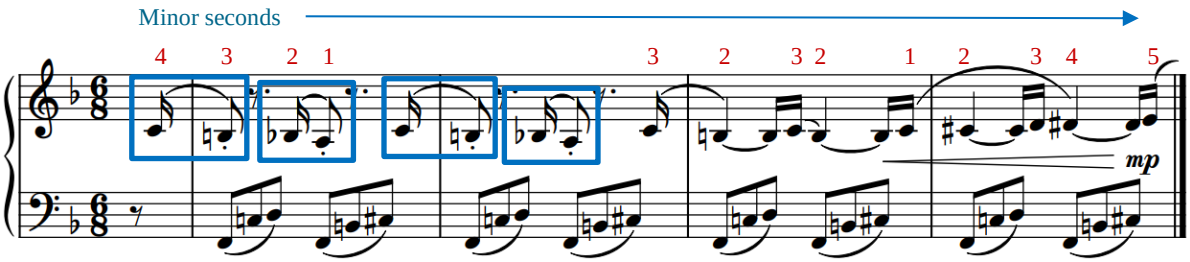
In the opening measures of the piece, Tanaka establishes a sense of metrical ambiguity. While the time signature is notated as 6/8 in measure 1, the piece opens with three consecutive quarter notes played by the left hand, a rhythm that does not resemble 6/8. This is followed by a full measure of rest in measure 2. It is not until the third measure that the rhythm suggests the compound meter of 6/8 (Example 5.8). However, by measure 6, there is a full measure of rest in 3/8 time, followed by another meter change to 9/8 in the following measure. Furthermore, a thirty-second-note run in measure 7 obscures any recognition of the shift to 9/8 time. It is not until the eighth measure that there is a clear and ongoing sense of 6/8, which continues through nearly the entire remainder of the piece. This metrical ambiguity is illustrated in Example 5.8.

Example 5.8: “Chinese Alligator,” mm. 1–7 (Opening)



In terms of pitch, “Chinese Alligator” features an extensive amount of chromaticism. Two intervals are particularly emphasized: the minor second and tritone. When the right-hand melody enters in measure 10, it features a series of two-note slurs played in a “short-long” rhythm. The pitches of each two-note gesture are always a minor second apart from each other (Example 5.9). This pattern continues for the entire opening phrase of eight measures.

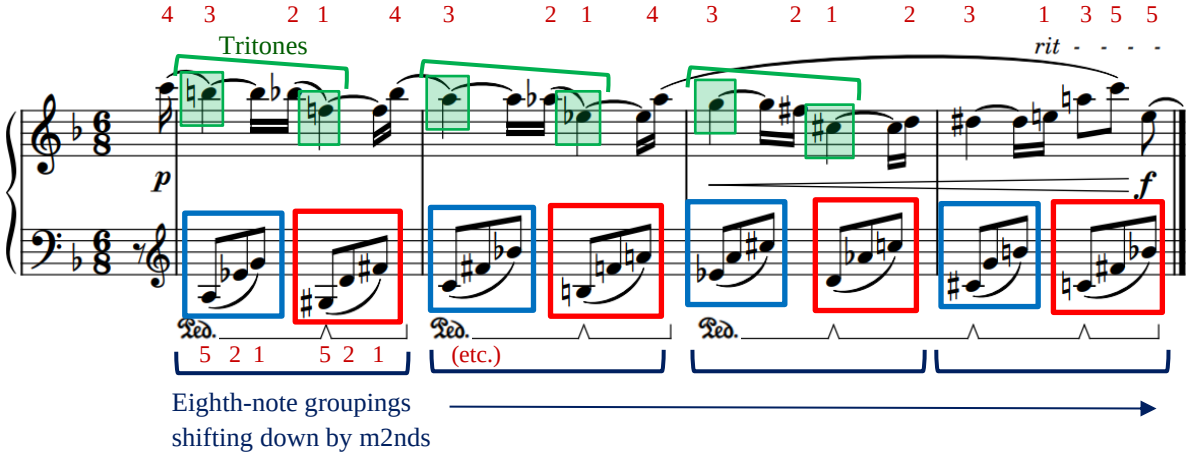
Example 5.9: “Chinese Alligator,” mm. 10–13 (First phrase)



The third phrase, beginning in measure 18, extends the two-note gesture of a minor second further. In addition to being part of the right-hand melody, the interval of a minor second

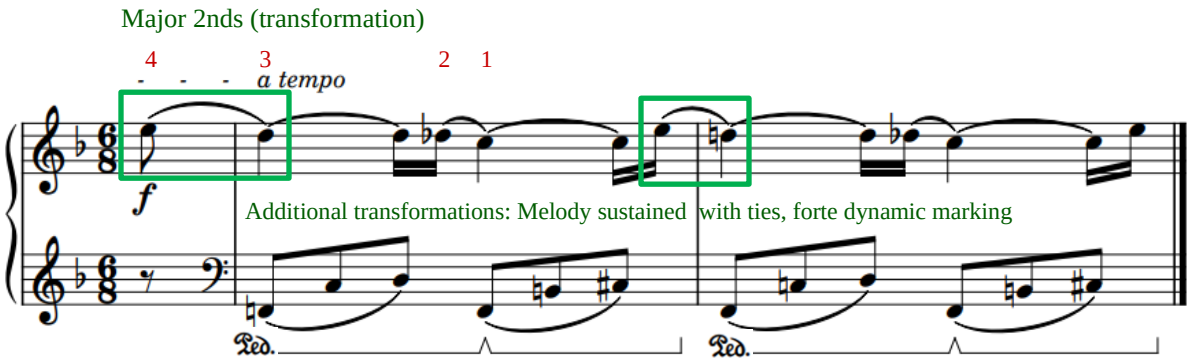
also becomes significant in the left-hand accompaniment (Example 5.10). From measures 18 through 21, the pitches of each eighth-note grouping move down by a minor second from the first to second beat of each measure. In the same group of measures, Tanaka introduces the interval of a tritone in the right hand. This interval occurs between the sustained pitches that sound on beats 1 and 2 of each measure, including B natural descending to F natural, A natural descending to E-flat, and G natural descending to C-sharp.

Example 5.10: "Chinese Alligator," mm. 18–21 (Third phrase)



While there is no clear musical form, the thematic material featuring the minor second undergoes a transformation near the end of the piece. Originally, the minor second motive is introduced in the first phrase in measure 10 (refer to Example 5.9). By the fourth phrase in measure 23, nearly every anacrusis has been transformed to a major second (Example 5.11). Several other musical aspects are also transformed. In terms of articulation, the two-note slurs that initially end with staccato markings become long notes that are sustained by ties. Dynamically, the original statement of the motive is to be played *piano*, while the transformed motive is played *forte*. In lieu of a traditional form, Tanaka uses the compositional technique of thematic transformation to bring a sense of unity to the piece.

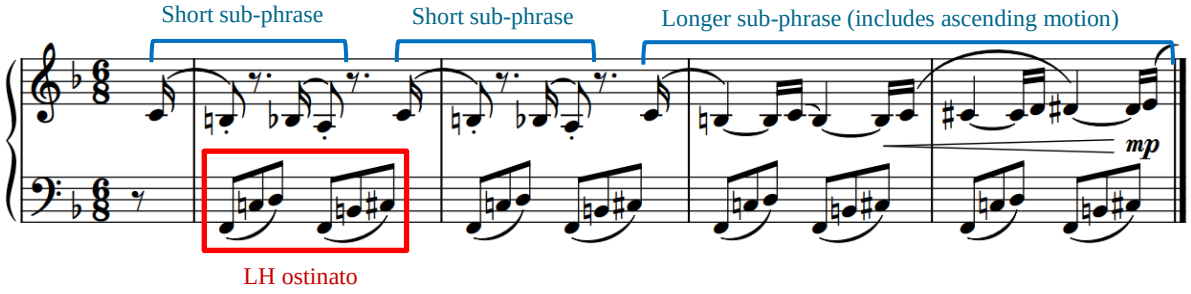
Example 5.11: “Chinese Alligator,” mm. 22–23 (Fourth phrase)



Pedagogical Applications:

One reading challenge of this Level 7 piece “Chinese Alligator” is the frequent inclusion of accidentals. As nearly every measure contains multiple accidentals, students may find difficulty in reading the notes. For this reason, it is important to emphasize reading by intervals, patterns, and phrases in the early stages of learning. For example, the first phrase is made up of an ostinato accompaniment in the left hand. The right-hand line contains two short sub-phrases and one longer sub-phrase (Example 5.12). The two short sub-phrases are identical, consisting of two pairs of descending minor seconds. The longer sub-phrase begins the same way, but quickly changes direction with ascending minor seconds. It is helpful for the student to discover these details, as this improves pattern recognition, an essential skill for learning new music with efficiency.

Example 5.12: “Chinese Alligator,” mm. 10–13 (First phrase)

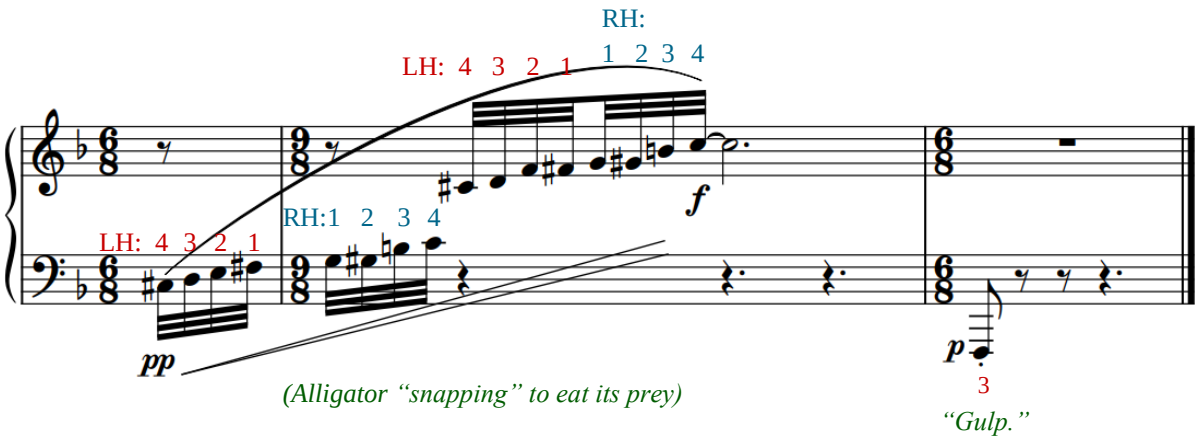


This strategy of pattern recognition can be applied to all five phrases of the piece. As mentioned in the compositional overview, the intervals of a minor second and tritone are used extensively throughout. However, each phrase uses these intervals in slightly different ways. It is important for the student to analyze the intervals and contour of each phrase to discover their distinguishing features. During this process, the teacher and student can brainstorm short catch phrases to summarize the characteristics of each phrase, such as "alternating seconds and tritones in descending motion" for the third phrase and "transformation of Phrase 1" for the fifth phrase. It could be useful for the student to create a musical map of this piece on a separate sheet of paper. This could consist of listing each part of the piece with short descriptions, including the opening measures, phrases 1 through 5, and the final measures. The student may choose to color code by interval or phrase and draw arrows, boxes, or circles to help depict the details of the piece in abstract form. Mapping out the piece in this way will help the student both in the early stages of learning as well as in the memorization stage while preparing for performance. This strategy can be particularly helpful for learning music with less familiar patterns, atonal writing, and a lack of clear form.

Bookending this piece are two thirty-second-note runs in ascending motion. These are brief occurrences that feature substantial chromaticism. The first run is found in measure 7 (refer to Example 5.8), and the second occurs in measures 28 and 29 (Example 5.13). Accompanied by dramatic crescendo markings, these swift runs provide a unique sound effect in the piece. This provides the opportunity for the student to imagine what the alligator could be doing to inspire this sound. One suggestion is that the running chromatic line could represent the alligator snapping its teeth to catch its prey. Based on the musical material notated in the score, the alligator is successful by the end of the piece, when the chromatic run is followed by a single

staccato note in the bass register, signifying a satisfying “gulp.” This imagery can help the student enhance the musical characteristics of this piece.

Example 5.13: “Chinese Alligator,” mm. 28–30 (Final measures)



Children of Light

Title: Northern Lights

Level: 7

Tempo: *Softly, with a mystic light* (♩ = 112)

Meter: 4/4, 6/4

Form: Ternary (loose) + Coda

Key Signature: 4 flats

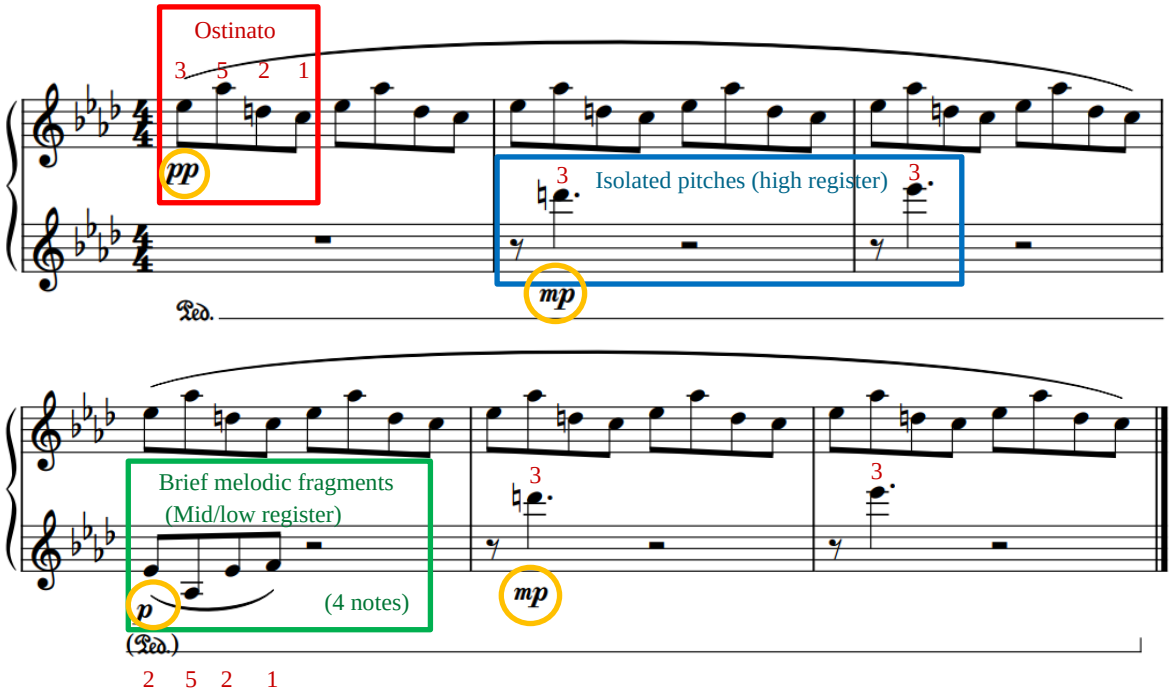
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Compositional Overview:

"Northern Lights" is a Level 7 piece that evokes sparks of color and light. With its undulating ostinato accompaniment, tonal harmonies in a non-tonal context, and colorful use of harmonic shading, this piece features elements of minimalism and French impressionism.

In the opening A section, Tanaka establishes an ethereal atmosphere by introducing a delicate ostinato played by the right hand. This consists of the pitches E-flat, A-flat, D-natural, and C-natural, which continues through the majority of the piece (Example 5.14). The D-natural in this pitch set creates inconsistency with the notated key signature of four flats. While the ostinato provides the backdrop for the piece, the left hand alternates between playing single, isolated pitches in the high register and brief melodic fragments in the middle and low registers of the piano. The high, isolated pitches require the left hand to cross over the right hand with frequency, often every other measure.

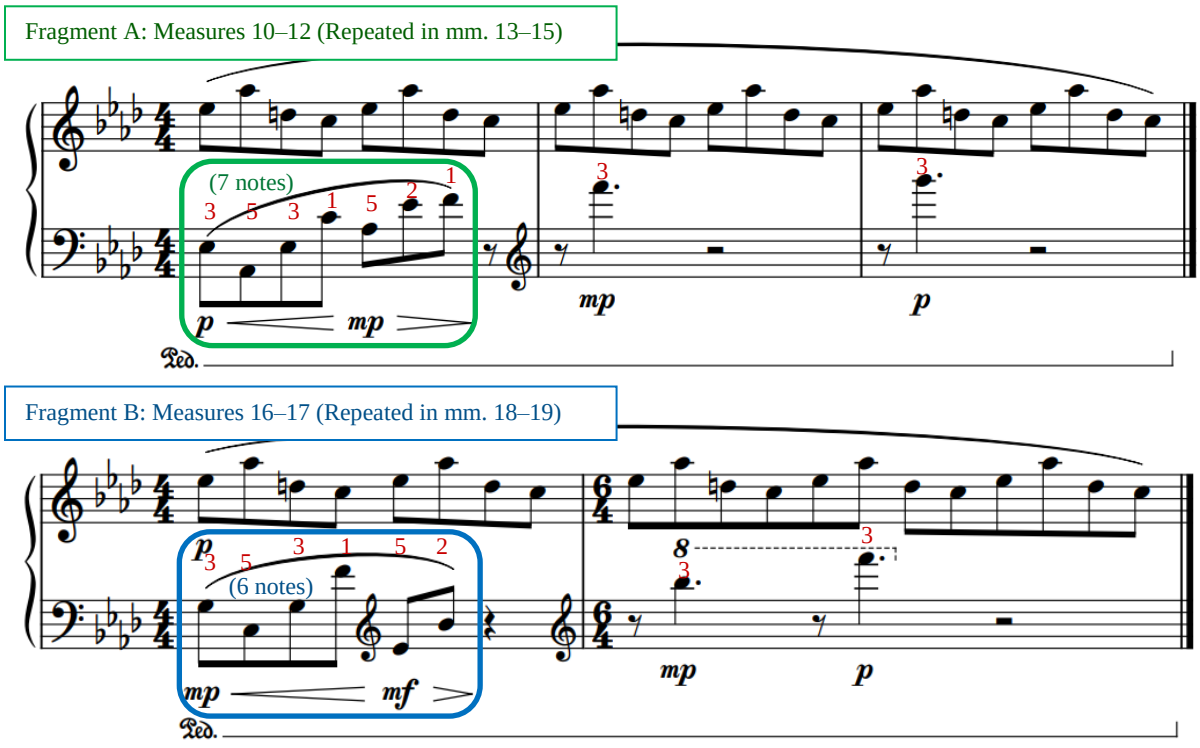
Example 5.14: “Northern Lights,” mm. 1–6 (A Section)



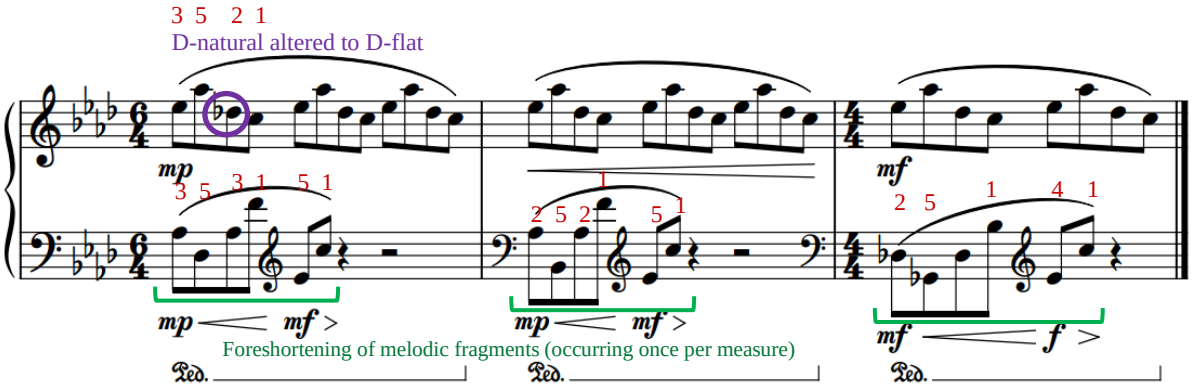
In total, the texture of this piece includes three layers: the ostinato accompaniment, isolated pitches in the high register, and brief melodic fragments. The dynamic markings indicate that specific layers should be highlighted at different points in the piece. While the ostinato always remains in the background, the isolated pitches take prominence in the opening measures. These are labeled *mezzo piano*, while the brief melodic fragments are labeled *piano* and the ostinato accompaniment *pianissimo* (refer to Example 5.14). As the piece develops, the emphasis gradually shifts to the brief melodic fragments becoming the dominant layer. This is evident in the dynamic markings, as the melodic fragments are increasingly notated as one level louder than those of the isolated pitches. While the three-part texture remains consistent throughout the piece, a sense of movement and fluidity is created by shifting the aural focus from one layer to another.

During the B section, Tanaka builds intensity through a variety of compositional means. First, the melodic fragments in the left hand are extended from four to six and seven eighth notes (Example 5.15). Additionally, each of the first two melodic fragments in the B section are stated twice. This repetition increases the intensity and generates momentum in the piece. Tanaka also adjusts the pitch set of the ostinato beginning in measure 21, altering the D-natural to D-flat (Example 5.16). This harmonic shift darkens and deepens the inflection and tone. In the same section, Tanaka utilizes the compositional technique of foreshortening. While the melodic fragments in the A section typically occur every three measures, the frequency accelerates to every measure in measure 21. The foreshortened section also presents different pitch material in every measure, thus eliminating the repetitions from the A section. The combination of these compositional techniques generates a consistent intensification of musical material throughout the B section.

Example 5.15: “Northern Lights,” mm. 10–12, 16–17 (Beginning of B Section)



Example 5.16: “Northern Lights,” mm. 21–23 (Middle of B Section)



Pedagogical Applications:

One of the primary musical goals of the Level 7 piece “Northern Lights” is to play the melodic fragments with a fluent, forward motion. In many cases, the melodic fragments are comprised of widely spaced intervals, including those shown in Examples 5.15 and 5.16. To achieve fluency in these lines, the first step is to establish decisive fingering in the early stages of learning with consistent reinforcement throughout the learning process. Sample fingerings are notated in Examples 5.15 and 5.16. The second step is to encourage the student to utilize a lateral motion of the wrist, providing the flexibility required for the hand to reach the widely spaced intervals with ease. This technique also promotes each melodic fragment to be played as one gesture, rather than six or seven individual notes. The third step is for the left hand to slightly extend the fingers while playing the melodic fragments. Elongating the fingers provides the wrist with a wider range of lateral motion, helping the fingers to play with fluidity, fluency, and musically shaped lines.

Another central musical goal of this piece is to create three distinct aural layers that consist of the ostinato accompaniment, isolated pitches, and brief melodic fragments. This can be accomplished by using a variety of touches and playing techniques. As the first layer of the

ostinato plays continuously throughout the piece, it is important for the notes to be played from the wrist rather than the fingers. This will provide an evenness of tone and prevent fatigue. The student could use subtle, gentle wrist circles moving in a counterclockwise direction to play the ostinato accompaniment in the right hand. To help the ostinato layer remain in the background, the student could play halfway into the keys, which produces a light, airy sound. The second layer, consisting of the single, isolated pitches played by the left hand, requires a more active touch. As these pitches are in the foreground of the piece, they must project effectively over the other layers. This can be achieved by using a quick attack that is close to the fingertip. Using a strong third finger creates a sense of "ping" in the tone quality that emulates the sound of bells.

The third layer, comprised of the brief melodic fragments in the left hand, has already been discussed in the first paragraph of pedagogical applications for this piece. However, it is important to clarify that the left hand plays two distinctive layers, including the bell-like isolated pitches in the high register and brief melodic fragments in the middle and lower registers. After successfully executing these layers independently, the student can then incorporate the hand crossings that are required to transition between these layers and their corresponding registers. To reflect the character of this gentle and flowing piece, it is important for the hand to cross with graceful arches and seamless fluidity. To accomplish this, the student can imagine the left hand floating weightlessly after the final note of each statement. This will help the student to release the last note with buoyancy and allow the left hand to move across the right hand with a graceful, floating arch. Incorporating this physical gesture will not only help the student to move around the keyboard with ease, but it can also represent a clear delineation between the two layers of the left hand, thus serving as a physical reminder to alternate between the corresponding touches.

Children of Light

Title: **Mountain Gorilla**

Level: 7

Tempo: *Lively* (♩ = 108)

Meter: 5/8

Form: Binary

Key Signature: None

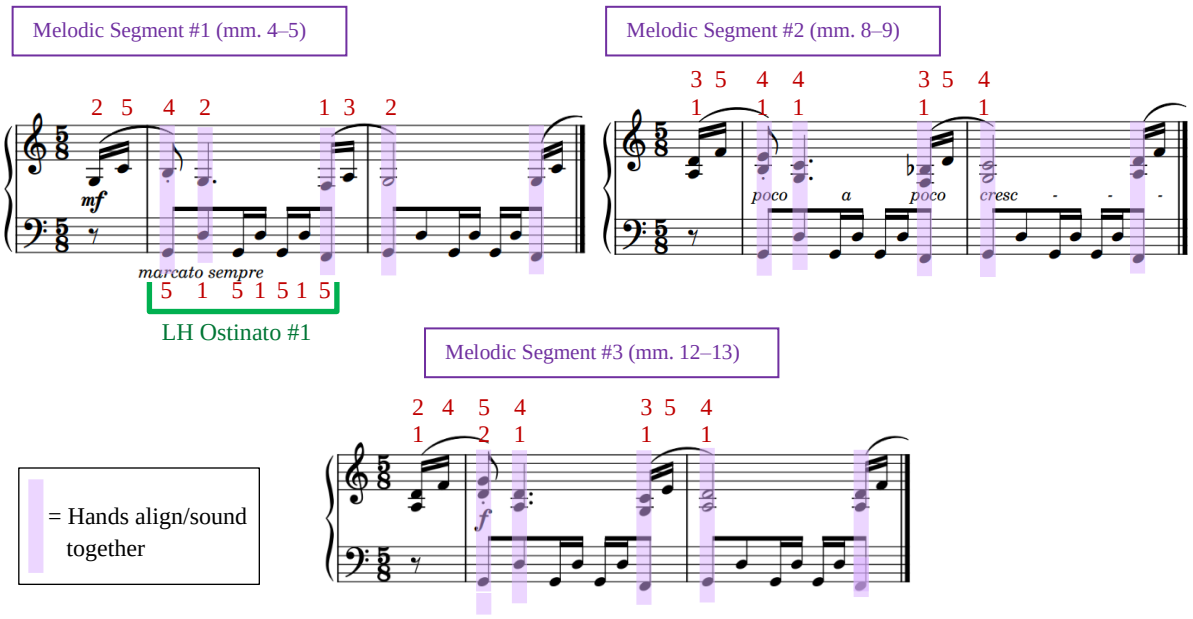
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Compositional Overview:

"Mountain Gorilla" is a Level 7 piece that depicts the clunky and lumbering movements of the mountain gorilla. The irregular meter of 5/8 and various ostinato patterns in the low register help to convey these heavy, labored movements, and it is one of the most minimalistic selections in *Children of Light.*

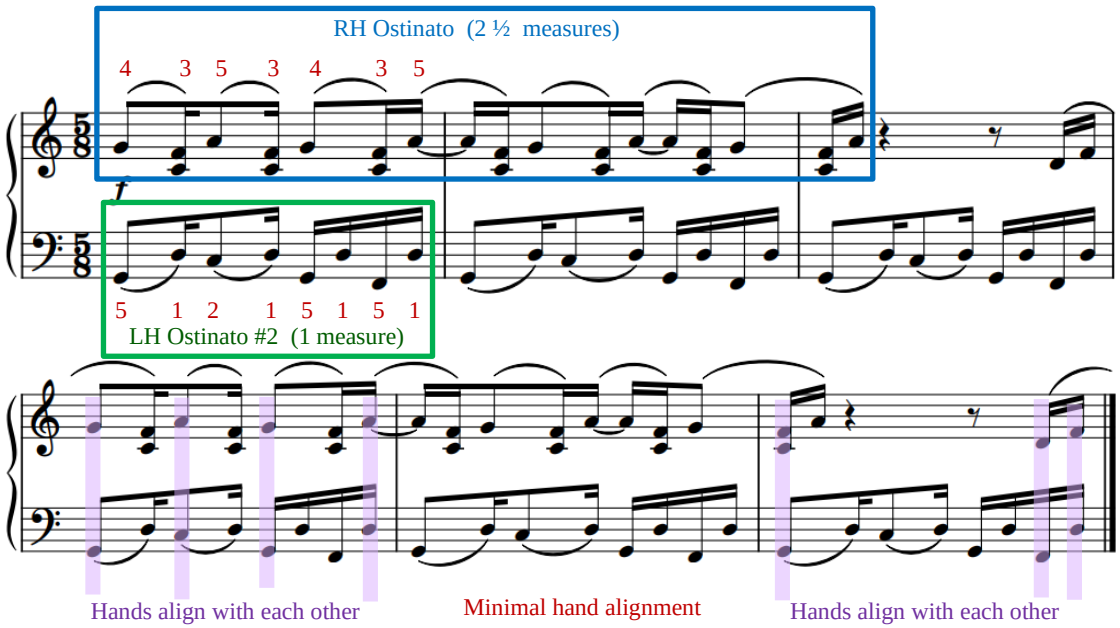
Throughout the piece, Tanaka alters the dynamics and rhythmic activity to intensify the musical character. Although "Mountain Gorilla" is one of the most rhythmically complex selections in the collection, the A section presents somewhat straightforward rhythmic material. The left hand features only one recurring ostinato, while the right hand plays three short melodic segments that are each repeated (Example 5.17). The rhythms of each hand align together in a relatively accessible way. The hands always align on the beat, either on beats 1 and 5 or beats 1, 2, and 5 of each measure. Additionally, the A section presents the most melodically based material in the piece. This is played by the right hand as both a single-line melody and with perfect harmonic fourths, which gradually increases in dynamic level throughout the section.

Example 5.17: “Mountain Gorilla,” mm. 4–5, 8–9, 12–13 (A Section)



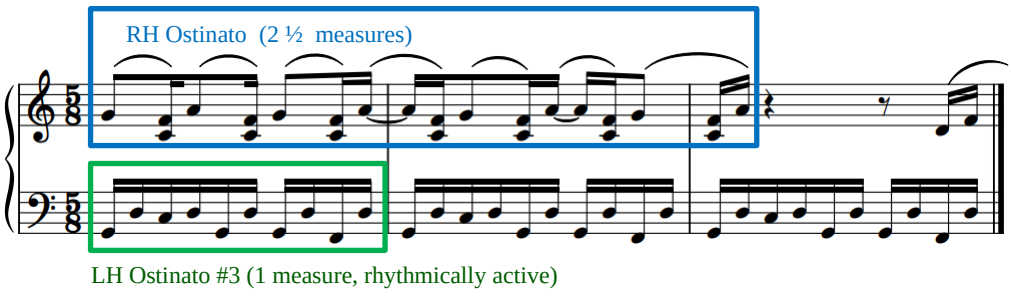
As the piece continues to build intensity, the B section is announced with a new rhythmic ostinato in the left hand. While the first ostinato from the A section is relatively straightforward, this second ostinato is syncopated and more rhythmically complex (Example 5.18). At the lively performance tempo indicated, this syncopation is perceived by the listener as edgy and somewhat unpredictable, especially at the *forte* dynamic level marked. Compounding this restless energy is the entrance of the right hand in measure 20. Here, the melodic material of the A section is replaced with a syncopated ostinato that is approximately two and a half measures in length. However, the rhythmic content of this ostinato does not match the left-hand ostinato of one measure in length. This results in the hands aligning together about half of the time, roughly every other measure (refer to Example 5.18). During the measures that the hands do not align, the rhythms of each hand significantly conflict with each other, which creates a complex and intricate rhythmic interaction between the hands.

Example 5.18: “Mountain Gorilla,” mm. 20–25 (First part of B Section)



This rhythmic friction continues to build intensity in the piece. As the B section continues, the third and final ostinato of the left hand is introduced. Comprised of only sixteenth notes, this is the most rhythmically active of all the ostinati (Example 5.19). The right-hand ostinato remains unchanged throughout the B section. On one hand, the interactions between the hands are slightly more streamlined, as the left hand plays in a “perpetuum mobile” style rather than both hands containing syncopated rhythms. Nevertheless, this final portion of the B section produces the most rhythmically active texture, which brings the piece to an energized and culminating conclusion.

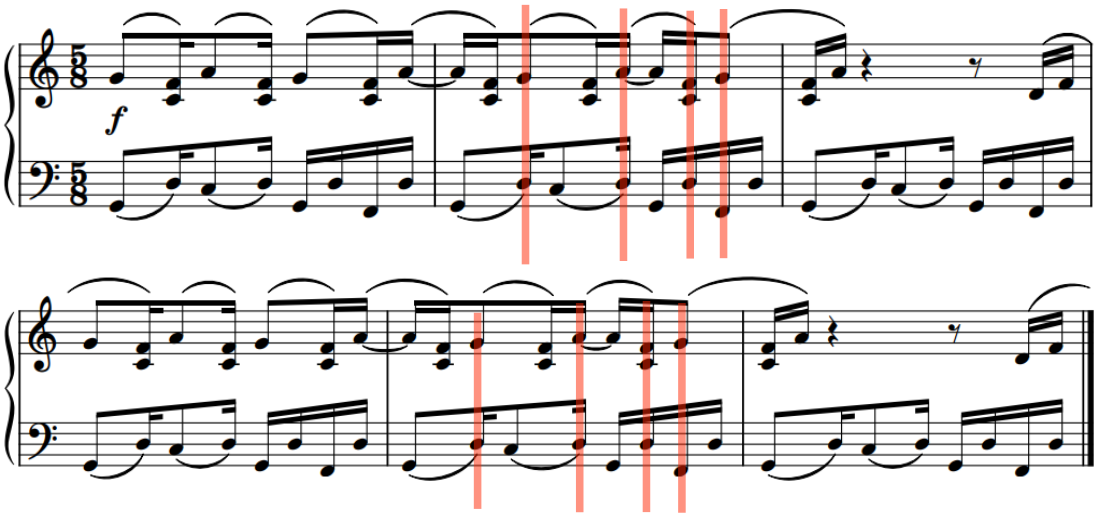
Example 5.19: “Mountain Gorilla,” mm. 26–28 (Second part of B Section)



Pedagogical Applications:

The most challenging aspect of the Level 7 piece "Mountain Gorilla" is aligning and coordinating the rhythms between the hands, particularly in the B section. As the syncopated rhythms of each hand overlap and form complex interactions with each other, it is important to guide the student through thoughtful, systematic steps to achieve technical mastery. In the early stages of learning, it could be helpful for the student to draw vertical "slashes" in the score to indicate where the hands align with each other. This is a particularly useful strategy to use during the measures with complex syncopation between the hands, such as measures 21 and 24 (Example 5.20). Seeing the slash marks provides the student with a visual indicator of the precise moments in which the hands sound together.

Example 5.20: "Mountain Gorilla," mm. 20–25 (Slashing, first part of B Section)



Following this initial strategy of slashing the score, the next step could be to practice the B section slowly while inserting periodic "stops." This provides an opportunity for the muscles to relax during a section that is prone to developing tension. Practicing with stops could be achieved by having the student slowly play the hands together from measure 20. Each time the

right hand plays the pitch A5, both hands could continue depressing the keys that align with this pitch. While the hands sustain these keys, the goal is for the student to physically relax the muscles in the arms, shoulders, and neck before continuing on to play the next segment. The pitch A5 is an effective choice for inserting stops because it typically occurs twice per measure in an evenly spaced distribution. This practice strategy not only helps to manage tension, but it also assists in developing muscle memory, which is critical to performing this piece at the performance tempo.

As the student develops the ability to effectively coordinate the hands at a faster tempo, it is important for the wrists to remain flexible. Stiff or locked wrists will generate tension, making it difficult to coordinate the hands successfully and produce a good tone. As the student works on increasing the tempo, it is also beneficial to continue inserting stops during practice. These built-in checkpoints allow the student to evaluate the flexibility of the wrist. If it is locked, the student can use the stop to reengage the wrist before continuing to play. This will train the wrist to maintain flexibility at a fast tempo.

Chapter 6: Late-Intermediate Pieces (Level 8)

Chapter 6 contains the most challenging selections in *Children of Light*. Comprised of pieces designated as Level 8, these works can be classified as late intermediate-level repertoire. They are comparable in difficulty to J.S. Bach's more difficult *Two-Part Inventions* and Beethoven's *Bagatelles, Op. 119.*[101] In increasing level of difficulty, titles to be discussed in this chapter include:

- Marsupial Mole
- Crested Ibis
- Crowned Eagle
- Florida Panther
- Galapagos Land Iguana
- Tiger
- Polar Bear

[101] Magrath, *Piano Literature for Teaching and Performance,* xv.

Children of Light

Title: Marsupial Mole

Level: 8

Tempo: *With delight* (♩. = 86)

Meter: 6/8, 8/8, 5/8

Form: Ternary + Coda

Key Signature: 3 sharps

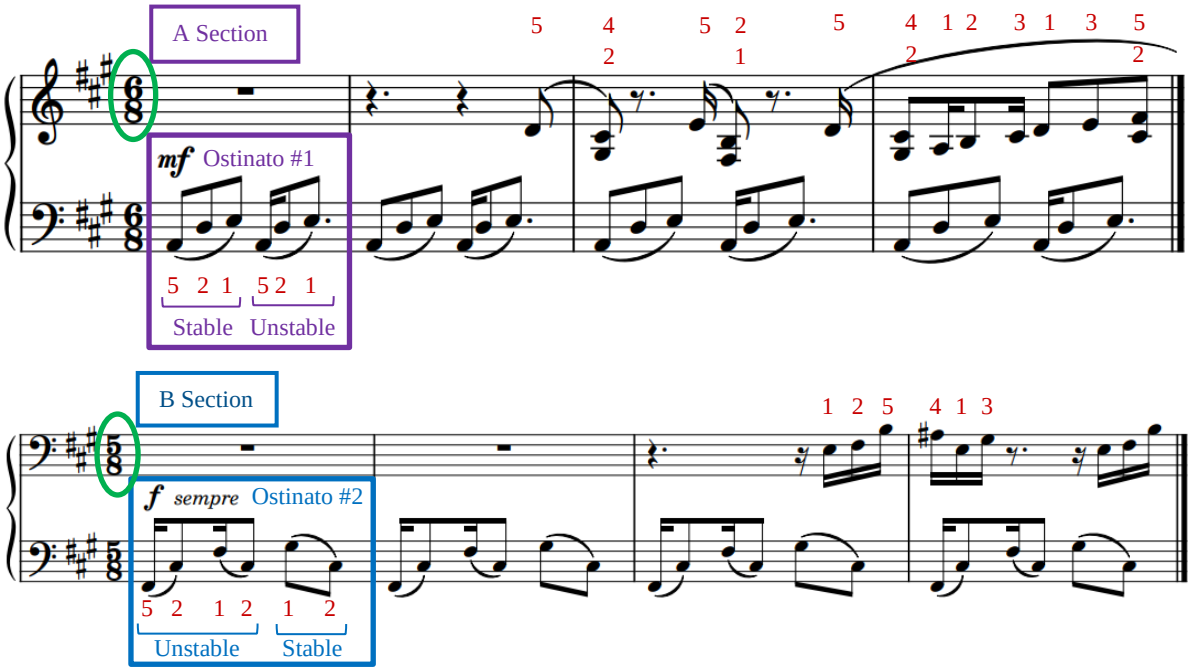
Pages: 3

Compositional Overview:

"Marsupial Mole" is a Level 8 piece with a quirky, meandering melody that emulates the wandering behavior of this animal. With its ostinato accompaniment and chromatic, often disjunct melodies, this piece exhibits elements of both minimalism and modernism.

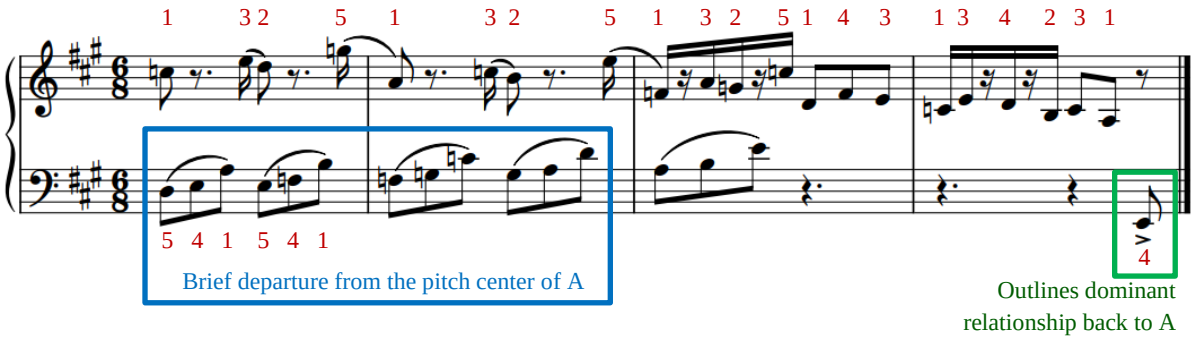
Tanaka uses meter and ostinati to clearly define the form of this piece. The A and B sections each begin with distinctive ostinato accompaniments that are played by the left hand (Example 6.1). Both ostinati are announced by the left hand alone, and the melody in the right hand enters a few measures later. While both ostinati feature syncopated rhythms, they occur at different points in the pattern. For example, the ostinato in the A section begins with straight eighth notes followed by a syncopated rhythm. In contrast, the ostinato in the B section begins with a syncopated rhythm followed by straight eighth notes. This creates a play between rhythmic stability and instability. In addition to distinguishing the sections with different ostinati, Tanaka also varies the meter. The A section is notated entirely in 6/8 time, while the B section is notated entirely in 5/8 time. One measure of 8/8 time is inserted between these two sections, serving as a bridge.

Example 6.1: “Marsupial Mole,” mm. 1–4 (A Section), mm. 22–25 (B Section)

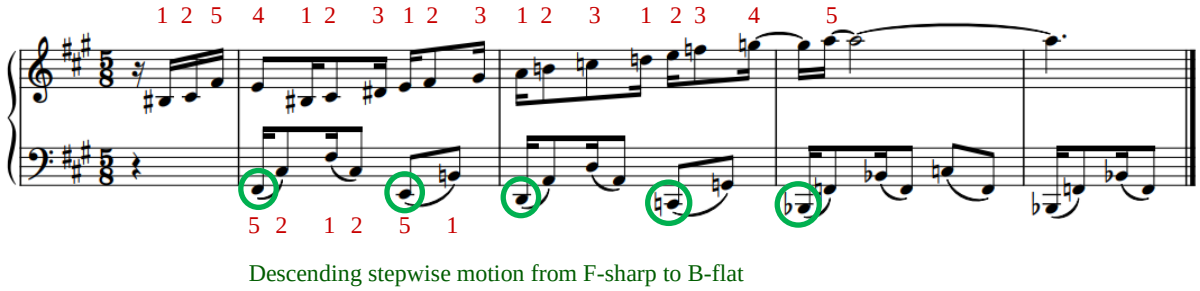


In terms of pitch content, the A section is comparatively more pitch-centered than the B section. The primary reason for this is the continuation of the left-hand ostinato pattern throughout the A section. The starting pitch is A in every measure the ostinato is played, serving as the pitch center. While two measures are inserted into the A section that do not suggest A as the pitch center, this is the only exception (Example 6.2). These transitional measures are brief, however, and they are followed by an anacrusis on the pitch E2 leading to A3 on the next downbeat, outlining a V–I relationship. In contrast, the ostinato in the B section is most accurately described as a rhythmic ostinato that does not adhere to one pitch center. Rather, it begins with F-sharp as a pitch center and gradually descends in stepwise motion until it reaches B-flat (Example 6.3). In this way, the B section can be described as harmonically fluid.

Example 6.2: “Marsupial Mole,” mm. 7–10 (Midpoint of A Section)

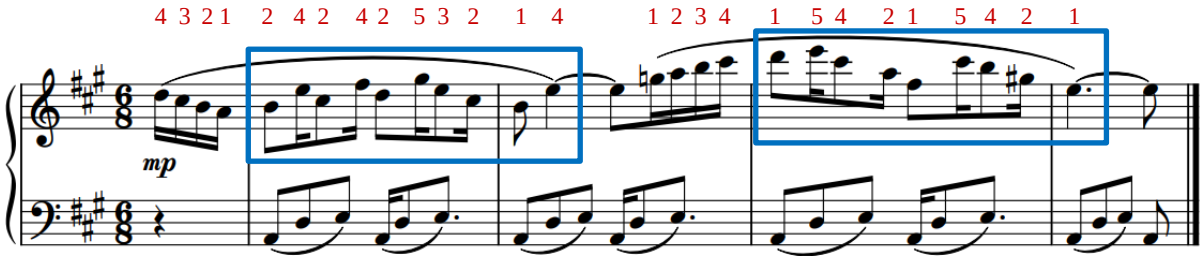


Example 6.3: “Marsupial Mole,” mm. 31–34 (B Section)



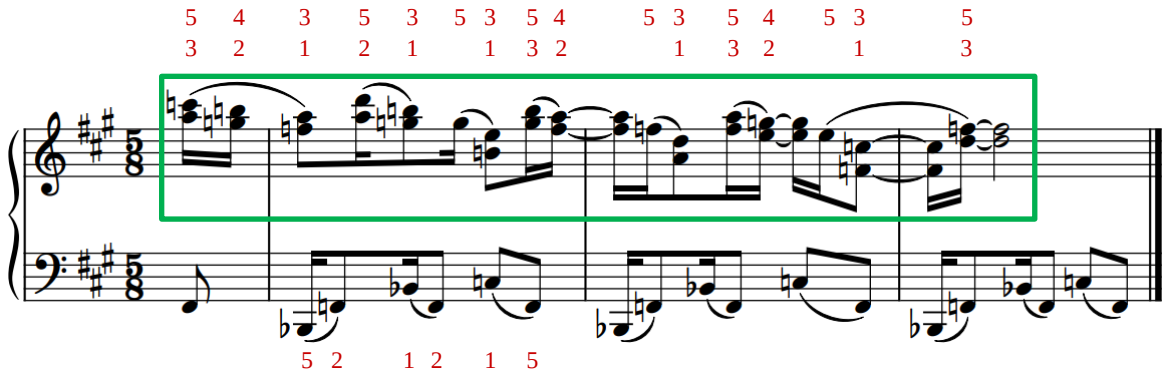
A unique feature of this piece is the chromatic, disjointed, and quirky melodic lines of the right hand. One example occurs towards the end of the A section, when the melody features disjunct intervals played in a syncopated rhythm (Example 6.4). Here, adjacent pitches typically span the intervals of a third or fourth. While the rhythm and intervallic content are somewhat unpredictable, Tanaka juxtaposes this with balanced phrase lengths and repeated syncopations. Another example of an unconventional melody occurs towards to end of the B section, at the point when the ostinato pattern descends to the pitch B-flat (Example 6.5). Here, the right hand features a different syncopated rhythm with a combination of double thirds and harmonic fourths and fifths. While the melodic content itself recalls elements from the melody featured in Example 6.4, the addition of harmonic intervals and a completely different pitch center make this excerpt particularly distinctive.

Example 6.4: “Marsupial Mole,” mm. 13–16 (A Section)



- Disjunct melodic intervals (3rds and 4ths)
- Balanced with the same syncopated rhythms and even phrase lengths (~2 measures each)

Example 6.5: “Marsupial Mole,” mm. 35–37 (B Section)



- Extended syncopated rhythm
- Double 3rds, harmonic 4ths and 5ths

Pedagogical Applications:

One of the most important elements of performing this Level 8 piece “Marsupial Mole” is establishing decisive fingering from the earliest stage of learning. This is specifically necessary for the melodic lines in the right hand. Due to the disjunct intervals that create widely spaced melodies, it is a priority to choose fingerings that allow the hand to cover as many notes as possible in one position to minimize the amount of finger crossings. For example, the suggested fingering for right-hand melody in Example 6.4 requires only one finger crossing in the span of four measures. Additionally, beginning on the second beat of measure 15, the right hand can

cover four notes in one position using fingers 5, 4, 2, and 1 (refer to Example 6.4). The same fingering can also be used to play the four subsequent notes, providing the fingers with some sense of kinesthetic predictability. For the melody featured in Example 6.5, it is important to choose fingering that allows the right hand to cover all the notes under each slur in one position. This will ensure a smooth connection between the notes and allow the hand to "chunk" this passage into smaller, more manageable segments. Sample fingerings for this piece are notated in Examples 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, and 6.5, found in the compositional overview of this piece.

Due to the very frequent syncopation, it is essential to utilize strategies that promote both a cognitive understanding of the rhythmic interactions between the hands and the physical coordination needed to achieve technical mastery. To encourage cognitive understanding during the early stages of learning, it is useful for the student to draw vertical slashes in the score indicating where the hands align and play simultaneously. The strategy of slashing the score serves as a visual reminder to help the student perceive precisely where the hands line up with each other. It is also critical to engage in slow practice, as this both reinforces the cognitive understanding of the syncopations and teaches the muscles how to physically coordinate the hands. Once it is comfortable for the hands to play together at a slow tempo, the student can gradually increase the tempo in small increments. When transitioning to a fast tempo, it is beneficial to designate short practice chunks that consist of a few measures at a time and end with a stop. This builds in opportunities for the student to physically relax and reset their muscles regularly, promoting healthy playing technique and reducing physical tension.

Children of Light

Title: **Crested Ibis**

Level: 8

Tempo: *With expression* (♩ = 80)

Meter: 4/4, 6/4

Form: Ternary

Key Signature: 4 flats

Pages: 4

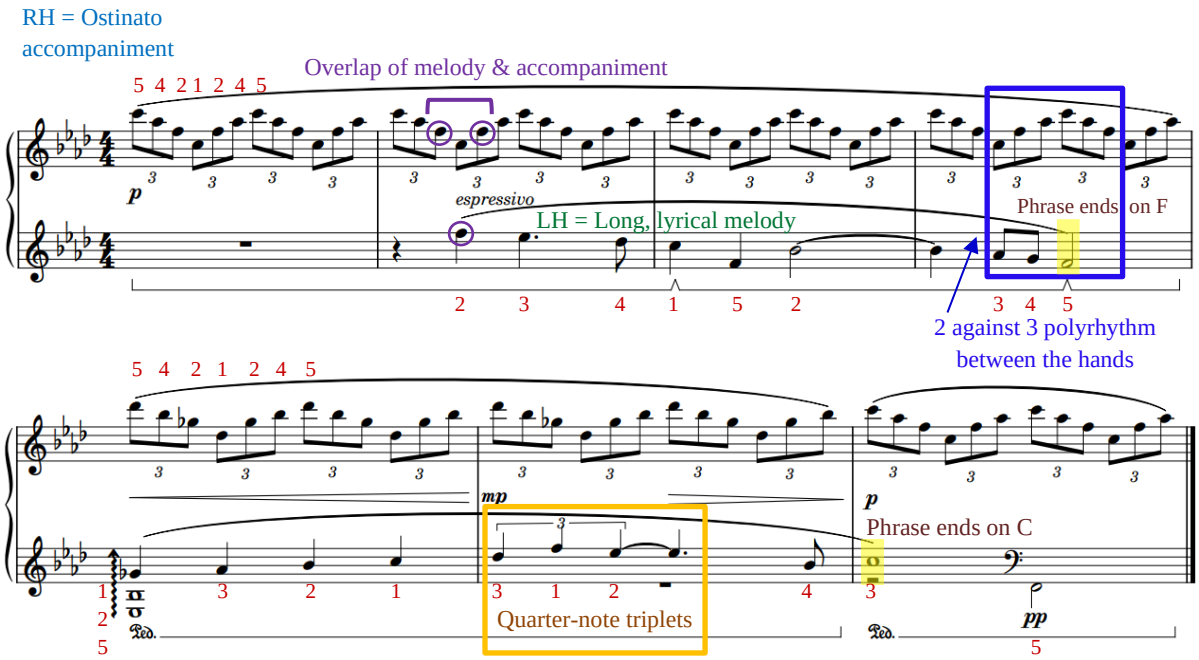
Compositional Overview:

"Crested Ibis" is a Level 8 piece with lush harmonies and long, lyrical lines that emulate the smooth, gliding movements of this bird across the sky. With its expressive nature, ostinato accompaniment, and sense of blur in the pedaling, this piece reflects the stylistic elements of neo-romanticism, minimalism, and French impressionism.

The texture of this piece is one of the clearest examples of homophony in the entire collection. Long, lyrical melodic lines are played by the left hand, while a gentle ostinato accompaniment is played by the right hand (Example 6.6). This textural distribution between the hands remains consistent throughout the piece. The ostinato accompaniment is based on broken triads performed in an eighth-note triplet rhythm. The reach of these broken triads spans one octave, as the pattern begins with the fifth of the triad descending to the third, root, and lower fifth. This pattern is then reversed and retraces the same pitches in an ascending direction. The single-line melody in the left hand encompasses a relatively high range, as it occurs between the pitches F3 and F5 and is notated almost entirely in the treble clef. Occasionally, the pitches of

both the melody and accompaniment overlap with each other, such as in the first entrance of the left-hand melody in measure 3 (refer to Example 6.6).

Example 6.6: “Crested Ibis,” mm. 1–7 (Beginning of A Section)



Another textural aspect of this piece is the polyrhythmic interplay between the hands. Both time signatures used in this piece, 4/4 and 6/4, are simple meters that imply duple subdivisions. The left-hand melody aligns with this metrical concept. However, the right-hand ostinato is consistently performed in triple subdivisions. Because the hands are played simultaneously, this creates a polyrhythm of three against two that recurs throughout the piece. It is important to note, however, that both the A and B sections include brief instances of the left hand playing a quarter-note triplet rhythm within the melodic line, such as in measure 6 (refer to Example 6.6). During these measures, the hands rhythmically align with natural ease.

Tanaka clearly defines the ternary form using several compositional elements. The sections of the piece can be easily identified by their time signature, as the A sections are notated

in 4/4 time, and the B section is notated in 6/4 time. In terms of harmony, the A sections are constructed with F as the pitch center. To the listener, the A sections may even sound tonal, as they begin and end with the harmony of F minor. Each phrase in the A sections also ends on either an F or C, possibly implying tonic and dominant functions (refer to Example 6.6). However, the F minor harmony introduced in the ostinato does not proceed with a traditional harmonic progression. Rather, it alternates only between itself and a G-flat major harmony. Therefore, the A sections can be described as using tonal harmonies in a non-tonal context.

The B section is distinguished by more chromatic harmonies and frequent rolled chords in the left hand. Both of these elements are used to generate intensity as the piece moves towards the climax. While the harmonies of F minor and G-flat major continue to be used the B section, the harmonies of F-sharp minor and E major are also inserted into the ostinato accompaniment, which are more distantly related to the pitch center of F. This creates harmonic tension and pulls the melodic line towards the climax, which occurs in measure 22 (Example 6.7). Tanaka also begins each measure of the B section with the left hand playing widely spaced rolled chords, the range of which continues to increase as the piece intensifies towards this climax. The B section begins with a rolled chord spanning the interval of a ninth, increases to the interval of an eleventh in measure 21, and arrives to the climax with the interval of a thirteenth in measure 22.

Example 6.7: “Crested Ibis,” mm. 17–23 (B Section)



Pedagogical Applications:

One of the most important pedagogical goals of the Level 8 piece “Crested Ibis” is to distinguish between the layers of melody and accompaniment. This is especially important when these two layers occur in very close registers, including the first entrance of the left-hand melody in measure 2 (refer to Example 6.6). Distinguishing between layers can be achieved in a variety of ways. Most fundamentally, each hand should play with a distinctive touch and key depth. The

right-hand accompaniment can be played effectively with a simple, delicate legato touch about halfway into the keys. This creates an airy, shimmering sound that serves as a gentle and undulating backdrop for the piece. By contrast, the left-hand melody requires a deeper, slightly overlapping legato touch played about three-quarters of the way into the keys. Playing on the fleshy pads of the fingers and relaxing the wrist in between notes will also help the left hand to play with a full and ringing tone. Additionally, it is helpful to engage the arm and elbow while playing the left hand, as this provides physical support and arm weight to the hand and fingers that will help bring prominence to the melodic line.

Another essential element of this piece is to execute the widely-spaced rolled chords with technical ease and sensitive musicianship. These recur regularly in the left hand throughout the piece. The rolled chords always occur on the first beat of a phrase, with the top pitch belonging to the melody (refer to Examples 6.6 and 6.7). The interval size between the lowest and highest pitches of the rolled chords ranges from a seventh to a thirteenth. Considering this wide span, it is essential for the wrist to utilize a lateral motion so that it can move through the notes with physical flexibility and ease. It is also important for the top pitch to receive the most weight out of all three pitches in the rolled chord, as the top pitch belongs to the melodic layer and the two lower pitches belong to the accompaniment. To accomplish this, the fingers can play the lower pitches with a light, quick motion that produces momentum. This energy will then lead to the top pitch, which can be played with the fleshy part of the thumb and a follow-through motion to relax the hand and produce a beautiful tone.

The pedaling in this piece requires a level of sophistication and nuance. Sustain pedal markings are notated in the score throughout the entire piece. The sustain pedal is typically depressed for one to two measures at a time, resulting in many stepwise melodic pitches being

sustained under the same pedal. To effectively manage the quantity of sound, the student could depress the pedal halfway during the portions of the piece with a *piano* dynamic marking. This will provide a sustained and refined sound effect within the confines of a soft dynamic level. As the piece moves toward its climax, the student may choose to depress the pedal more deeply, perhaps three-quarters of the way down for *mezzo forte* and all the way down for *forte.* In this way, the sustain pedal is being used to support the changes in dynamic level.

Children of Light

Title: Crowned Eagle

Level: 8

Tempo: *From far up in the sky* (♩ = 108)

Meter: 4/4, 6/4

Form: Ternary + Coda

Key Signature: 4 sharps

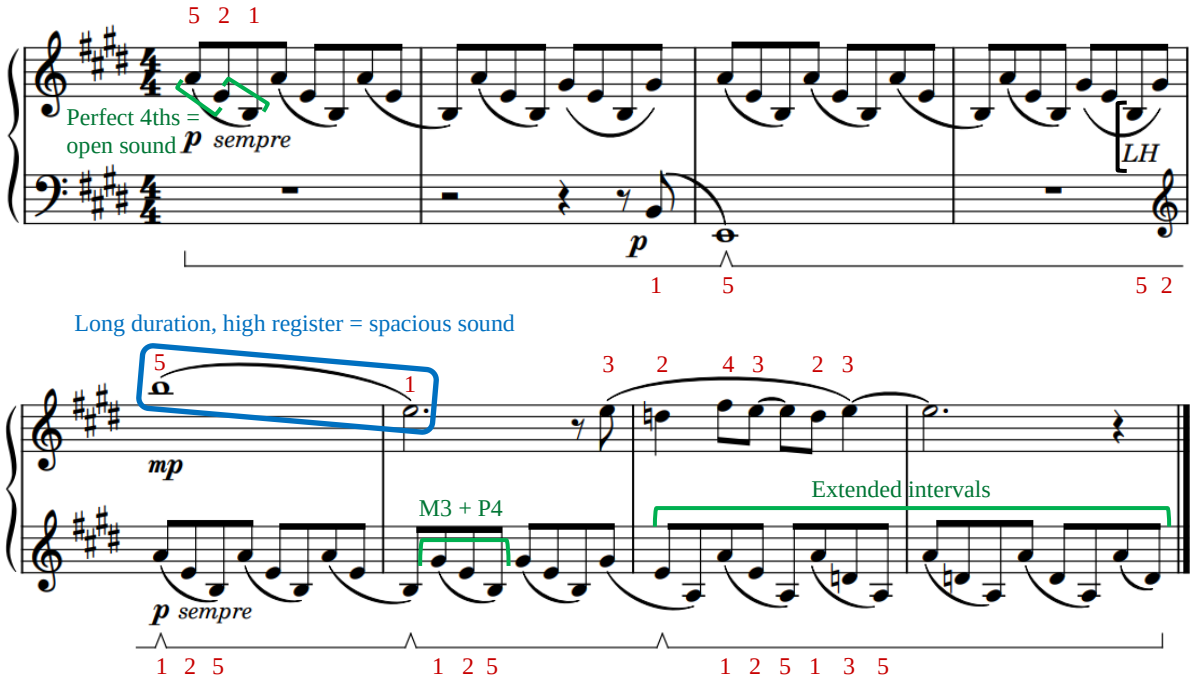
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Compositional Overview:

"Crowned Eagle" is a Level 8 piece featuring and airy and open sound produced by sustained melodic lines in the high register of the piano. This aural effect is suggestive of an eagle soaring high in the sky, looking down at the trees below. With the repetitive pitch patterns in the accompaniment and unusual phrase groupings obscuring the downbeats, this piece is reflective of minimalism.

From the opening of "Crowned Eagle," Tanaka creates a spacious atmosphere using a variety of compositional characteristics. The four-measure introduction opens with the accompaniment alone, which is based on a recurring pattern of three descending pitches. Initially, these pitches are each spaced apart by the interval of a fourth, providing an openness to the sound that is magnified by the sustain pedal (Example 6.8). When the melody enters in measure 5, it begins with a whole note on the pitch B6 descending to a dotted-half note on the pitch E5. The high register and extended duration of these pitches also provides a sense of aural space. As the A section continues, the intervals of the accompaniment are expanded to also include fifths, further supporting the intention to create an open, spacious sound.

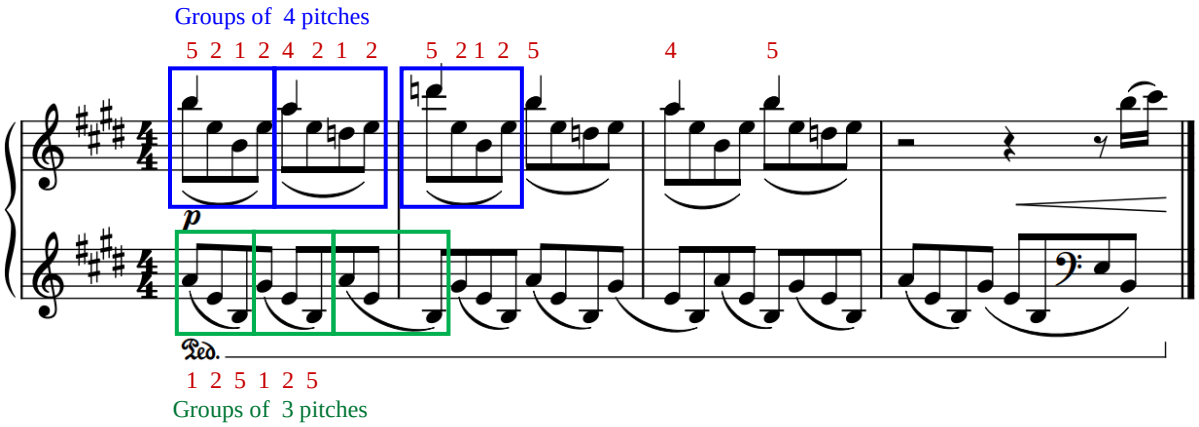
Example 6.8: “Crowned Eagle,” mm. 1–8 (Beginning of A Section)



While this piece does contain minimalistic elements, they are presented in somewhat unique ways. Most of the other minimalistic selections in the collection *Children of Light* are based on one or two ostinato accompaniments that recur throughout the piece and use the same pitches. In contrast, Tanaka creates the illusion of ostinati in “Crowned Eagle” by continually notating groups of three descending pitches throughout the A section. However, the specific pitches and intervals within these groups periodically change (refer to Example 6.8). Additionally, the pitches in the final four measures of the A section undergo phase shifting, a compositional technique associated with minimalism. Phase shifting occurs when two similar lines are played simultaneously. The result is two lines moving in and out of time with each other. In the case of “Crowned Eagle,” phase shifting occurs as a result of both hands playing ostinato-like patterns with slightly different lengths. While the left hand continues to play

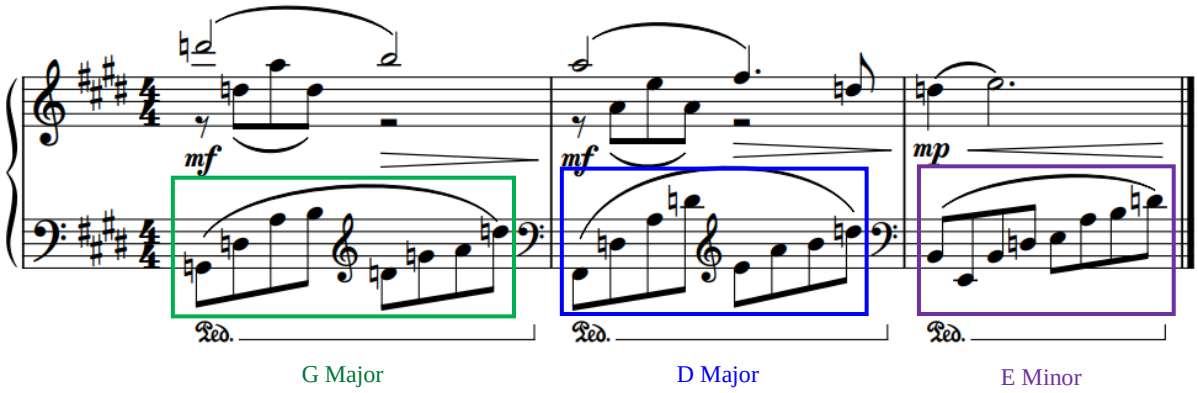
groupings of three pitches, the right hand plays groupings of four pitches (Example 6.9). This creates a sense of moving in and out of time, which also obscures the downbeats as a result.

Example 6.9: “Crowned Eagle,” mm. 13–16 (End of A Section, phase shifting)



In terms of pitch and harmony, this piece features several distinctive elements. While the piece is not tonal, Tanaka seems to allude to pitch centers and potential modes in both the A and B sections. In the A section, the pitch E recurs throughout most of the accompaniment. Considering the key signature of four sharps, inclusion of G-sharp, and the consistent lowering of D-sharp to D-natural, the A section could be suggestive of E mixolydian. In the B section, the key signature maintains four sharps. However, several natural signs are notated in each measure of the B section. Samples of the resulting harmonies include G major, D major, and E minor, respectively, occurring in measures 17 through 19 (Example 6.10). This harmonic progression is suggestive of G major (I–V–vi). Similar harmonic progressions continue in the B section, but not consistently enough to analyze this section formally in the key of G major. Rather, it is more appropriate to discuss the harmonic treatment of this piece in terms of alluding to pitch centers and modes instead of assigning precise tonal labels to each section.

Example 6.10: “Crowned Eagle,” mm. 17–19 (Beginning of B Section)



Pedagogical Applications:

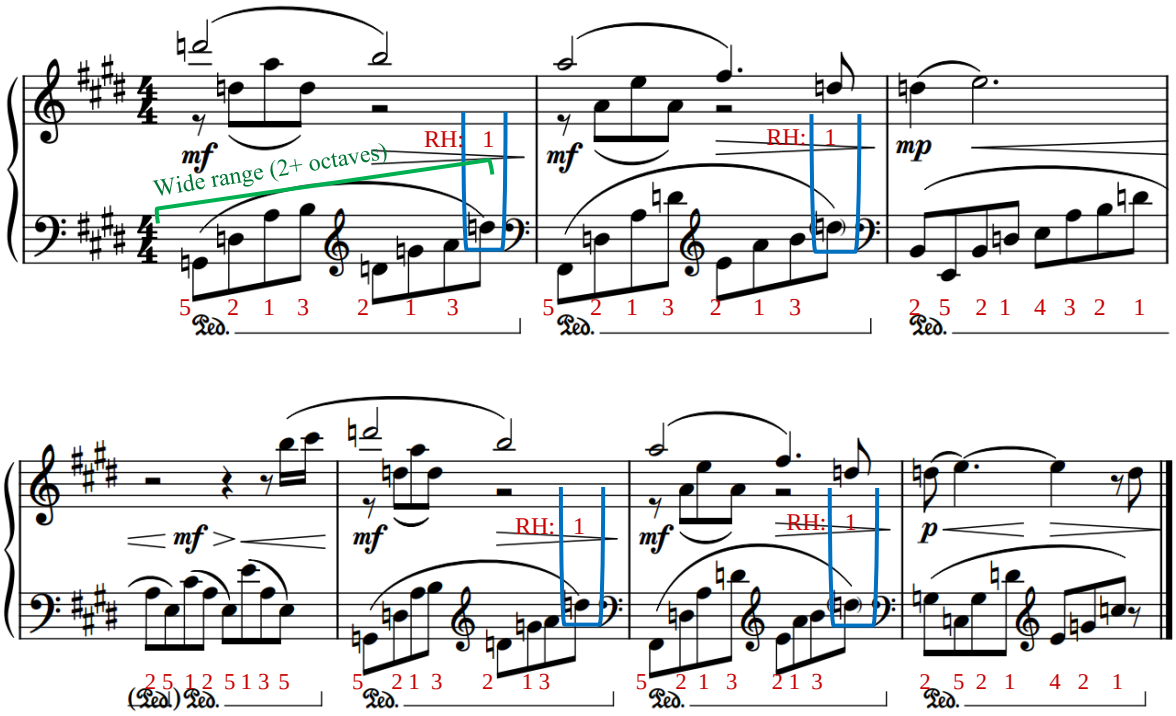
While there is a natural alignment between the hands and no syncopation in the Level 8 piece “Crowned Eagle,” the student may experience some difficulty coordinating the hands during the measures with phase shifting (refer to Example 6.9). Because the left hand is grouped in threes and the right hand is grouped in fours, there are minimal instances when the first notes of both hands’ groupings align with each other. This causes the downbeats to become obscured, and in turn, the metrical stability is also weakened.

To help the student execute this passage in measures 13 through 16, it could be beneficial to play both hands while inserting periodic stops. First, the student could use the left-hand phrase markings to determine the placement of the stops. In this case, the first three eighth notes in both hands would be followed by a stop. During the stop, the hands could continue to depress the last note of the grouping while the hands, arms, and shoulders relax. This process would be repeated for each group of three notes that follows until measure 16 (refer to Example 6.9). After this, the student can change the placement of the stops by following the phrase markings of the right hand, which is grouped in fours. Inserting a stop after every four notes will change the perspective of musical material, allowing the student to develop the physical coordination

necessary to execute this passage with technical proficiency. Ultimately, the student will likely focus more on the groupings of four in the right hand, as the first note of these groupings is notated with a double stem (refer to Example 6.9). However, practicing this passage in groupings of both threes and fours will promote a comprehensive understanding of how the hands align with each other.

Another technical challenge of this piece is the widely spaced accompaniment played by the left hand in the B section. Most frequently, the accompaniment pattern is one measure in length and consists of a series of ascending intervals. Within one measure, the range of left-hand pitches often spans two octaves plus a fifth or sixth (Example 6.11). Because of this wide range, it can be helpful to redistribute the highest left-hand note to the right hand for most measures in the B section. Not only does this eliminate an additional finger crossing, but it also provides the left hand with time to move back down to the bass register for the next measure. About half of the time, the hands share the same final pitch of a measure, making it very simple for the right hand to "take over" the left-hand pitch. During the other half of the time, the right hand reaches the interval of a sixth to play the final left-hand pitch of a measure, making for a very simple yet effective hand redistribution.

Example 6.11: “Crowned Eagle,” mm. 17–23 (B Section, hand redistributions)



Children of Light

Title: Florida Panther

Level: 8
Tempo: *Lively* (♩ = 120)
Meter: 5/8, 3/8
Form: Through-composed
Key Signature: None
Pages: 3

Compositional Overview:

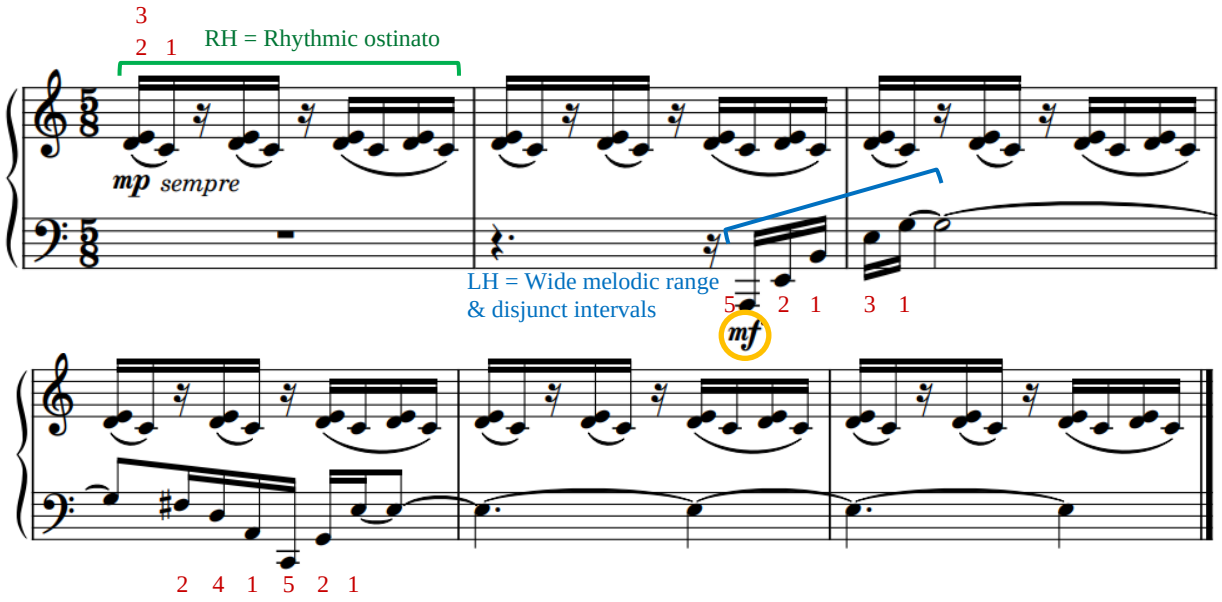
"Florida Panther" is a Level 8 piece that evokes the imagery of a hungry panther hunting for its prey. With the constant rhythmic ostinato in the right hand and colorful chord clusters throughout, this piece features several characteristic elements of minimalism.

Although "Florida Panther" lacks a clear form, it can be classified by two primary textures: moving and stagnant. Because the right-hand material features the same complex rhythmic ostinato throughout the entire piece, these two textures are defined by the pitch content of the left hand. The "moving" texture opens the piece, with the left hand playing widely-spaced intervals in a moderately low register of the piano (Example 6.12). In terms of rhythm, this left-hand motive is announced with rapid sixteenth notes entering on an off-beat, followed by a long note sustained by a tie. As a result of the wide melodic range, disjunct intervals, rapid tempo, and *mezzo forte* and *forte* dynamic levels, the character of this motive is assertive and incitive, evoking the image of a panther actively running to catch its prey.

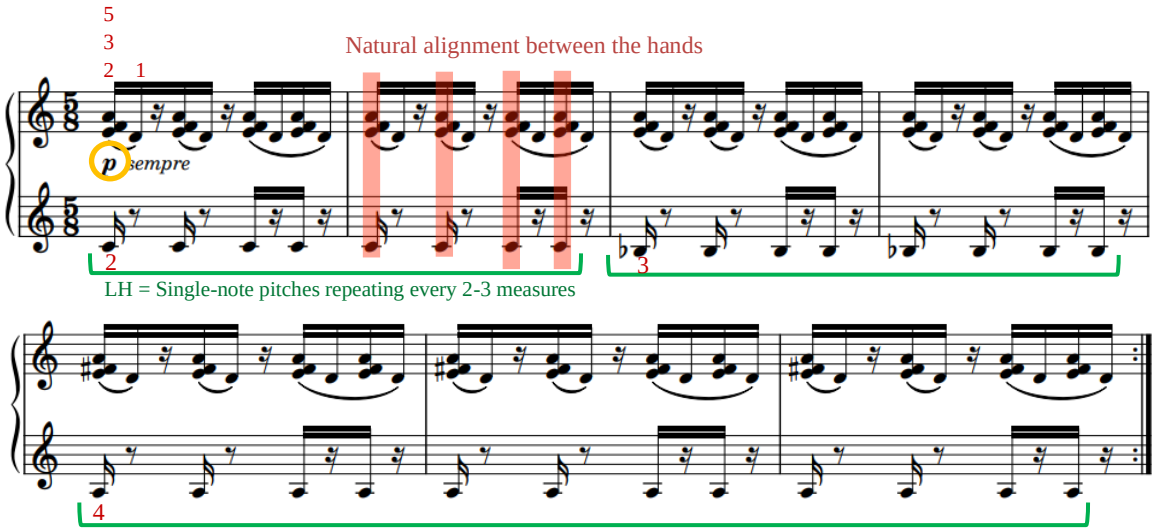
In contrast, the "stagnant" texture features left-hand material that is considerably more stationary. Taking on the rhythmic identity of the right-hand ostinato, this left-hand motive is

based on a series of single pitches that changes every two to three measures (Example 6.13). Rhythmically, the hands align with each other in a natural way, playing together on the first of every two-note gesture. Upon the entrance of this "stagnant" texture, the dynamic level decreases to *piano*, which is reinforced by the notation of *sempre* in the score. Considering the limited pitch range, rhythmic conformity between the hands, and subdued dynamic level, this texture could suggest the panther crouching low to the ground, hiding while searching for its prey.

Example 6.12: "Florida Panther," mm. 3–8 ("Moving" texture)

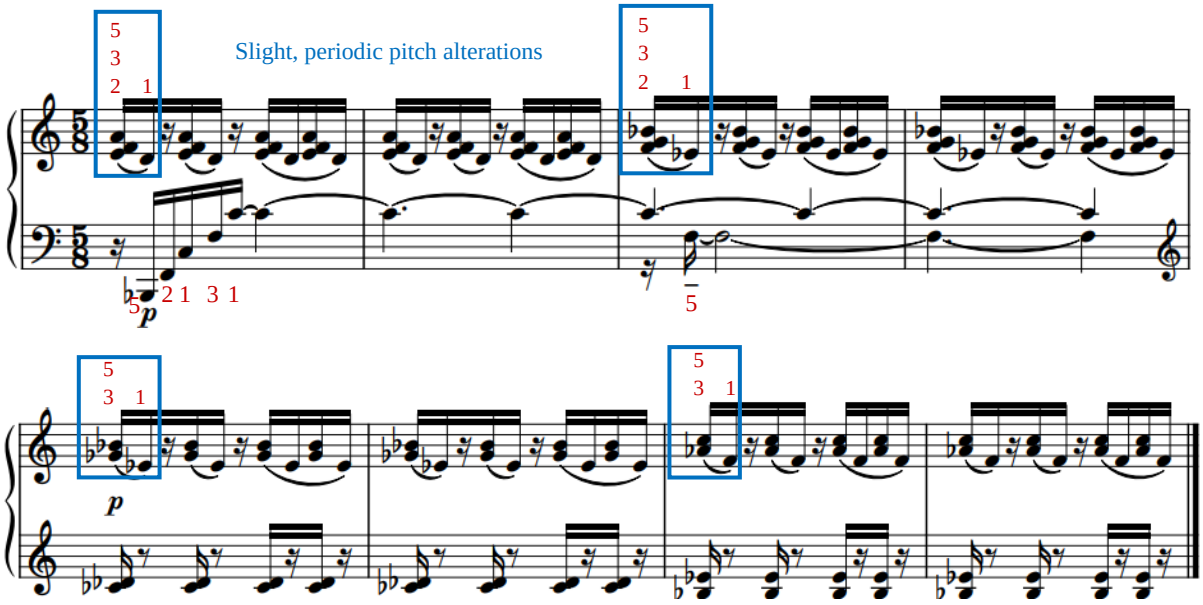


Example 6.13: “Florida Panther,” mm. 20–26 (“Stagnant” texture)



While some variability exists among the dynamics and textural effects in this piece, its minimalistic elements take precedence. Featured particularly in the right-hand ostinato and the sections of “stagnant” texture is a signature compositional technique used by Tanaka in her minimalistic selections. While the rhythm of the right-hand ostinato remains unchanged, the pitch content undergoes slight periodic alterations throughout the piece (Example 6.14). This generates a sense of motion and a very gradual evolution of the musical material. Interestingly, as this piece moves in and out of the moving and stagnant textures and undergoes periodic changes to the pitch content and dynamics, it does not really develop musically. There is no climax or clear point of arrival during any point, which is one of the clearest indicators of its minimalistic quality.

Example 6.14: “Florida Panther,” mm. 31–38 (Pitch alterations)



Pedagogical Applications:

Considering the lack of clear form and musical development in the Level 8 piece “Florida Panther,” it would be helpful for the student to create their own structure for the piece through storytelling. To introduce this idea, the student could be asked to imagine that this piece is the soundtrack for a live-action scene of a panther hunting in the wild. It could be helpful for the teacher to ask leading questions that encourage the student to construct their narrative based on the musical material of the piece. For example, after the student identifies that there are two primary textures, the teacher could ask the student, “How is the panther is behaving when the left-hand plays the rapid sixteenth notes with widely-spaced intervals? How is the panther’s behavior different when the left-hand rhythm is similar to the right hand and the pitches stay much more in one place?” Asking these questions will help the student to connect their imagination with the music itself, which will bring more meaning and structure to a piece with an ambiguous form. Writing brief, descriptive phrases in the score that illustrate the action of the

scene will help the student engage with the music and anticipate the next "scene change." Samples of descriptive phrases are listed below:

The panther crouches low to the ground.
The panther spots his prey and moves carefully in that direction.
The panther surveys his surroundings and plots the attack.
The panther sprints towards his prey.
The panther growls ferociously and pounces to complete the capture.

Due to the repetitive rhythmic patterns and widely spaced intervals, it is important for the hands to utilize specific playing techniques that minimize physical effort and maximize technical ease. In the case of the rhythmic ostinato that dominates the right hand, it could be helpful to initiate the physical gesture from the elbow. This will create an impulse that uses the forearm as the playing apparatus, rather than the fingers. Doing so will redistribute the control to a larger set of muscles, which provides a more consistent, even tone and prevents physical fatigue. As the right-hand ostinato is based on a recurring two-note gesture separated by sixteenth rests, the impulse from the elbow would also benefit from being paired with a follow-through motion. This will release any tension that had been used to play the two-note gesture, and it can be achieved with a rebound motion of the wrist during the sixteenth rests. During sections of the "stagnant" texture, the left hand should also utilize a rebounding wrist to support a healthy playing technique.

A different technique should be used in the left hand for the "moving" texture, when widely spaced intervals encompass an expansive range of pitches (refer to Example 6.12). Here, it is important for the left hand to play with a flexible wrist using a lateral motion. This will allow the hand to reach these widely-spaced intervals with optimal accuracy and physical ease.

Children of Light

Title: Galapagos Land Iguana

Level: 8

Tempo: *Mysteriously* (♩. = 74)

Meter: 6/8

Form: Ternary + Coda

Key Signature: 6 sharps (A Section), 3 flats (B Section)

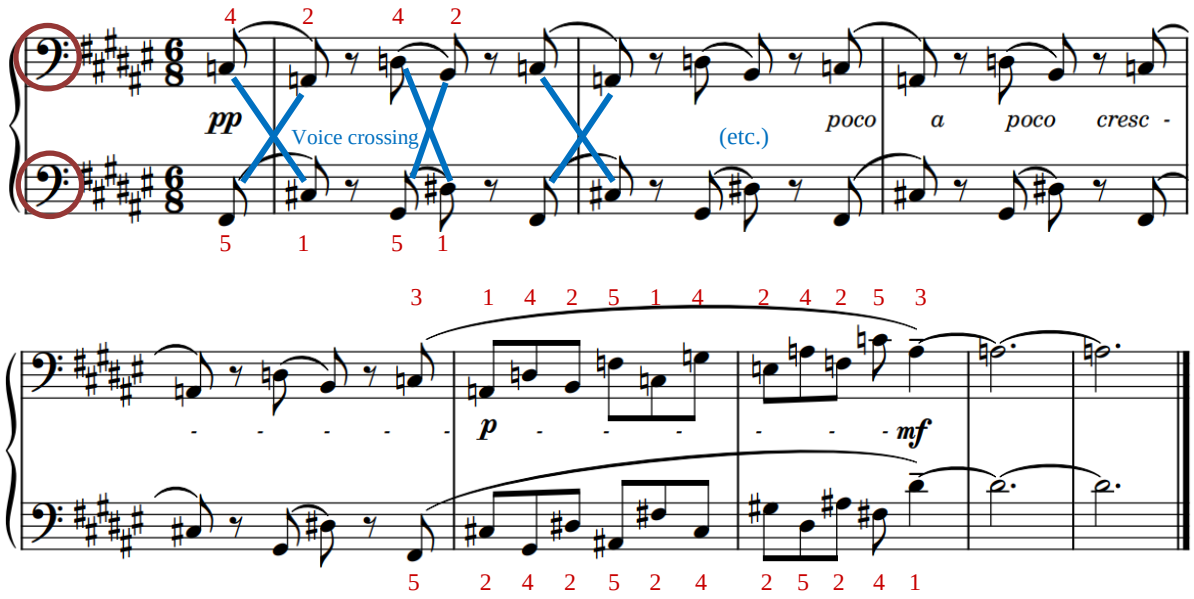
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Compositional Overview:

"Galapagos Land Iguana" is a Level 8 piece with a mysterious and wandering character. With its extensive chromaticism, textural effects, and lyrical writing, this piece reflects the compositional styles of modernism and neo-romanticism.

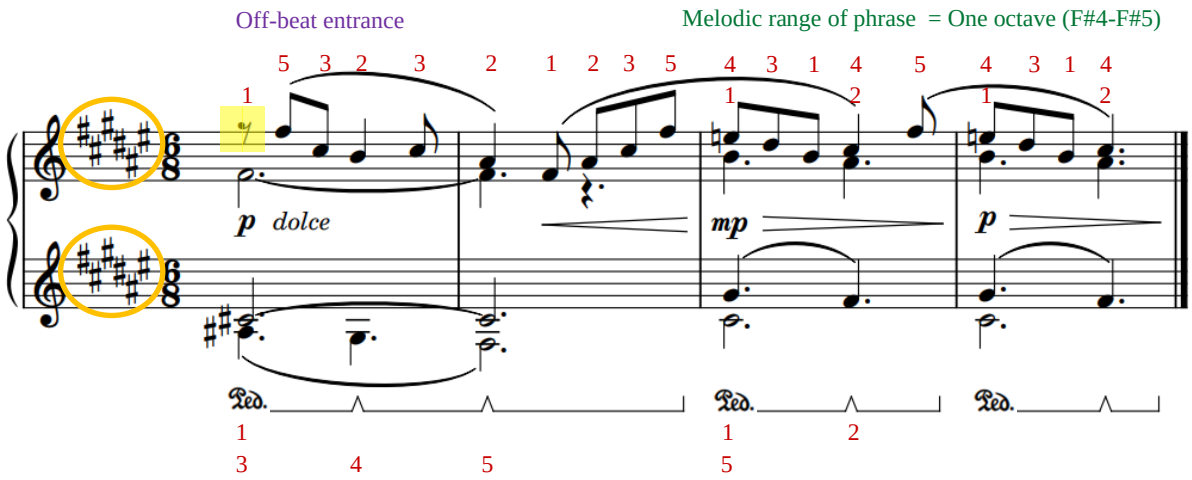
"Galapagos Land Iguana" can be categorized into two primary textures. The first of these occurs during the introduction and coda. It is primarily atmospheric in nature and does not have a clearly perceivable melody. Instead, both hands contain frequent accidentals, play in the low register of the piano, and are in close proximity to each other. As a result, voice crossing consistently occurs between the hands (Example 6.15). The rhythmic gesture is based on a recurring two-note slur figure followed by an eighth rest. This creates a disjointed flow, as there is a continuous cycle of motion followed by a brief pause. When this rhythmic behavior is combined with the low register and extensive chromaticism, the resulting effect suggests an iguana crawling slowly through its habitat.

Example 6.15: “Galapagos Land Iguana,” mm. 1–8 (Introduction)

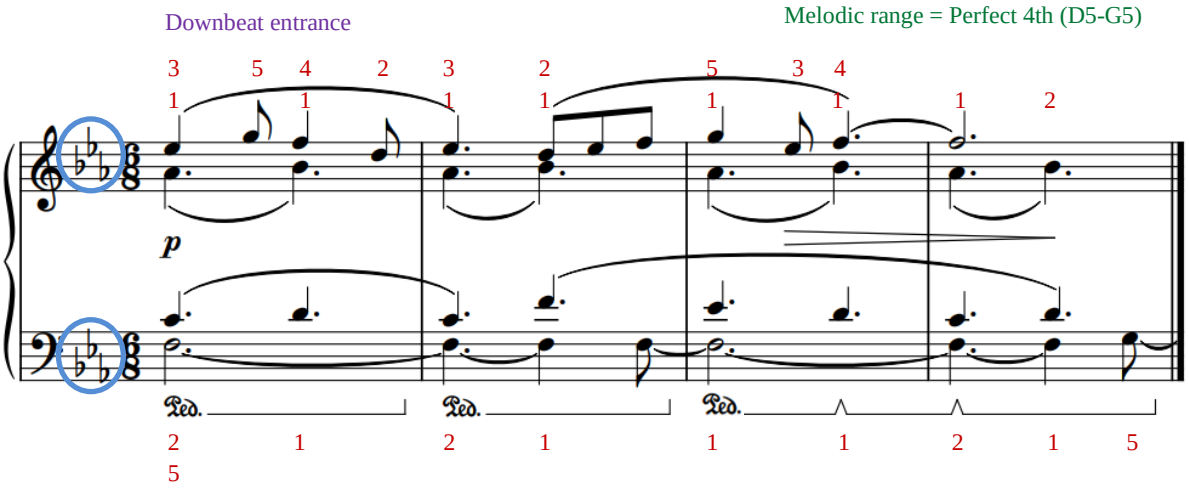


The second texture of this piece is lyrical and homophonic, which provides a considerable contrast to the “crawling” and disjunct texture previously discussed. This homophonic texture occurs throughout the A and B sections. It is constructed in four voices, with the lowest three providing harmonic accompaniment for the moving melodic line in the soprano voice. While the melodic material in both sections is organized into four-measure phrases, there are several characteristics that distinguish these two sections. The A section features melodic lines that span one octave and begin on off-beats, specifically on the “and” of beat 1 (Example 6.16). By contrast, the melodic lines in the B section span the smaller range of a fourth and consistently enter on the downbeats (Example 6.17). Additionally, the B section changes from the original key signature of six sharps to the very distant key signature of three flats. This also contributes to the changing mood and character between the A and B sections.

Example 6.16: “Galapagos Land Iguana,” mm. 9–12 (A Section)



Example 6.17: “Galapagos Land Iguana,” mm. 20–23 (B Section)



Pedagogical Applications:

Due to the close proximity of the hands in the introduction and coda of the Level 8 piece “Galapagos Land Iguana,” it is important to carefully plan the placement and choreography of each hand. Because of the constant voice crossing illustrated in Example 6.15, the likelihood of the hands bumping into each other is high. To prevent this from occurring, two principal strategies can be employed. The first is to position the right hand with a slightly lower wrist

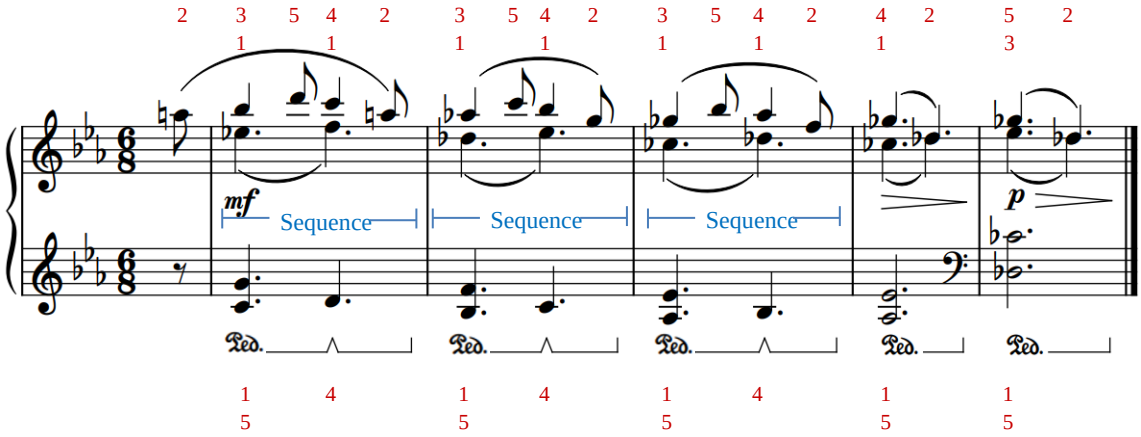
towards the edge of the keys and the left hand with a slightly higher wrist a little further into the keys. This arrangement allows the left hand to easily reach over the right hand each time there is a voice crossing, which occurs two to three times per measure. The second strategy is to choose specific fingerings that allow the hands to play simultaneously and limit the potential of bumping into each other. This could mean that the selected fingerings may differ from the fingering that would be logically used to play each hand alone. Suggested fingerings for hands together are notated in Example 6.15.

A crucial component to developing as a mature musician is expanding the student's perception of tonality and harmonic function. When pieces are composed in a definitive tonality, the student can expect to encounter harmonies and chord progressions that belong to the specified key. For example, it is likely that the first phrase will begin on a I chord and end with a half cadence (V), and the second phrase will end with an authentic cadence (V–I). More extended chord progressions may also be encountered, such as those with predominant functions (I–IV–ii6–V7–I). When the student reaches an intermediate level of technical proficiency, they will know how to perform traditional chord progressions with ease and recognize them readily in repertoire. They will also develop the ability to recognize melodic patterns that commonly align with these chord progressions. However, when assigned a piece with harmonic functions that extend beyond the limits of tonal harmony, new strategies must be developed to recognize pitch patterns in less conventional ways.

In the case of "Galapagos Land Iguana," the frequent use of accidentals may be an obstacle for the student searching for recognizable pitch patterns. Decisive fingering can be used to help the maximize pitch pattern recognition. To demonstrate this strategy to the student, it could be helpful for the teacher to notate the suggested fingering in measure 28 (Example 6.18).

The teacher can then prompt the student to continue writing in the fingering for the following measures using the teacher's model as a guide. This will help the student to recognize the melodic sequence that occurs from measures 28 through 30. Applying the same fingering for each iteration of the sequence will reinforce the aural and muscle memory needed to master this pitch pattern, much like the process of mastering chord progressions in a tonal context.

Example 6.18: "Galapagos Land Iguana," mm. 28–32 (End of B Section)



Children of Light

***Title*: Tiger**

Level: 8

Tempo: *Energetically* (♩ = 144)

Meter: 3/4, 4/4, 5/8, 6/8, 9/8, 8/8, 2/4, 3/8, 2/8

Form: Ternary + Coda

Key Signature: 1 flat

Pages: 3

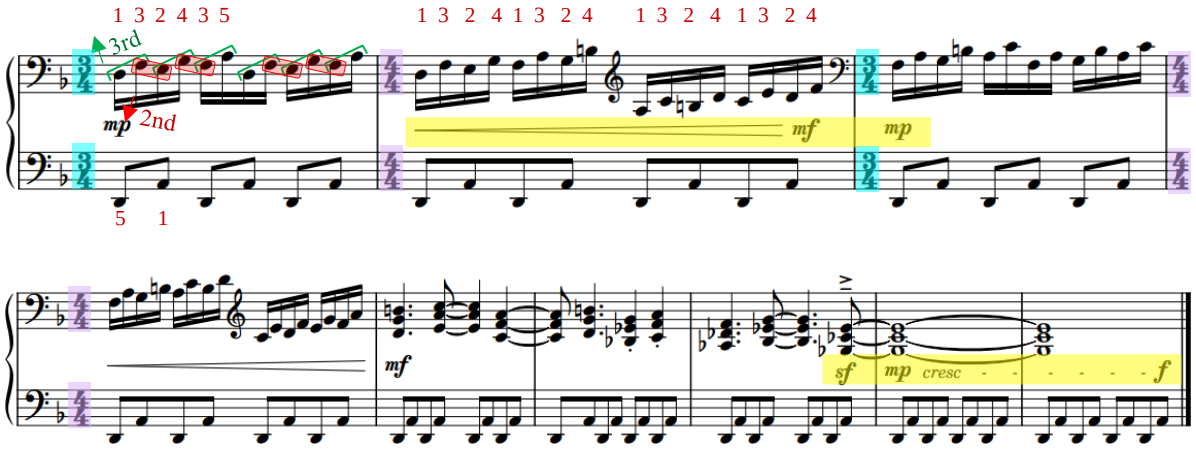
Compositional Overview:

"Tiger" is a Level 8 piece with a relentless, brooding, and fiery energy. Its frequent meter changes and running sixteenth notes create a continuous sense of motion that emulates the actions of an aggravated tiger. With its repetitive pitch patterns, melodic ostinati, and lack of harmonic progression, this piece features elements of minimalism and modernism.

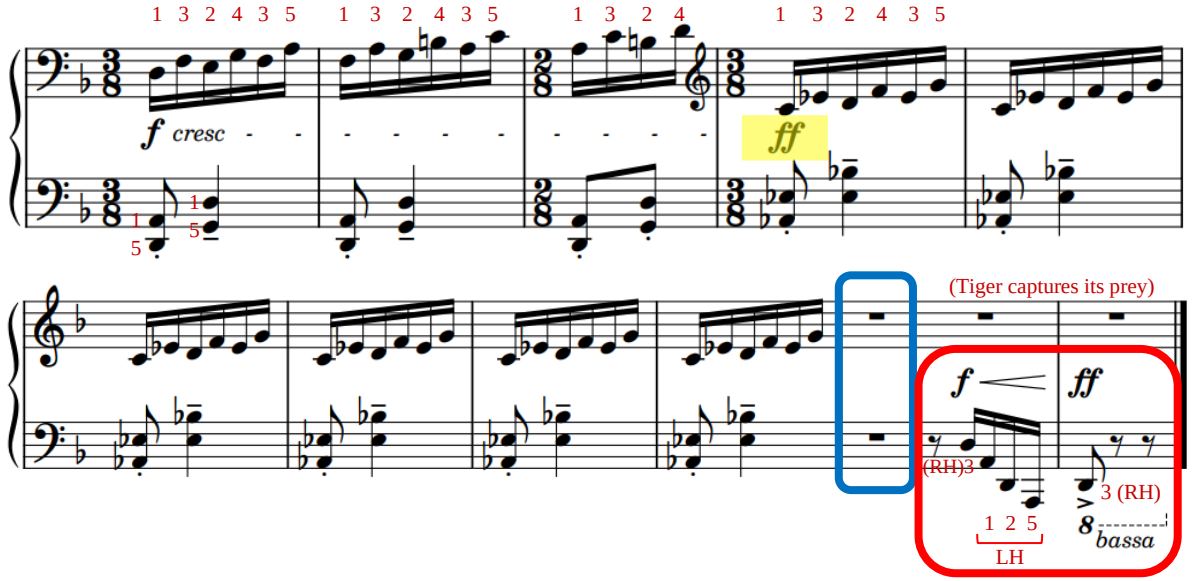
Several compositional elements are used to evoke an aural representation of a tiger. In terms of register, the A section is scored with both hands exclusively in the bass clef, as well as the majority of the coda. The low register is indicative of an animal who lives on land, close to the ground, and uses a guttural roar to assert its dominance. In terms of pitch content, the right hand primarily plays running sixteenth notes in a recurring pattern of skipping up a third and stepping down a second (Example 6.19). This constant changing of direction may suggest a tiger taunting its prey. This depiction is reinforced by the crescendo markings that are often followed by an immediate drop in dynamic level (refer to Example 6.19). By the time the piece reaches the coda, the intensity and perpetual motion of the sixteenth notes reaches a climax. This is achieved by a crescendo culminating a *fortissimo* dynamic level and pitch material that is

repeated relentlessly for six measures. Immediately following is a dramatic pause and final descending gesture that plummets to a decisive close, perhaps depicting the tiger finally catching its prey (Example 6.20).

Example 6.19: “Tiger,” mm. 1–9 (Beginning of A Section)



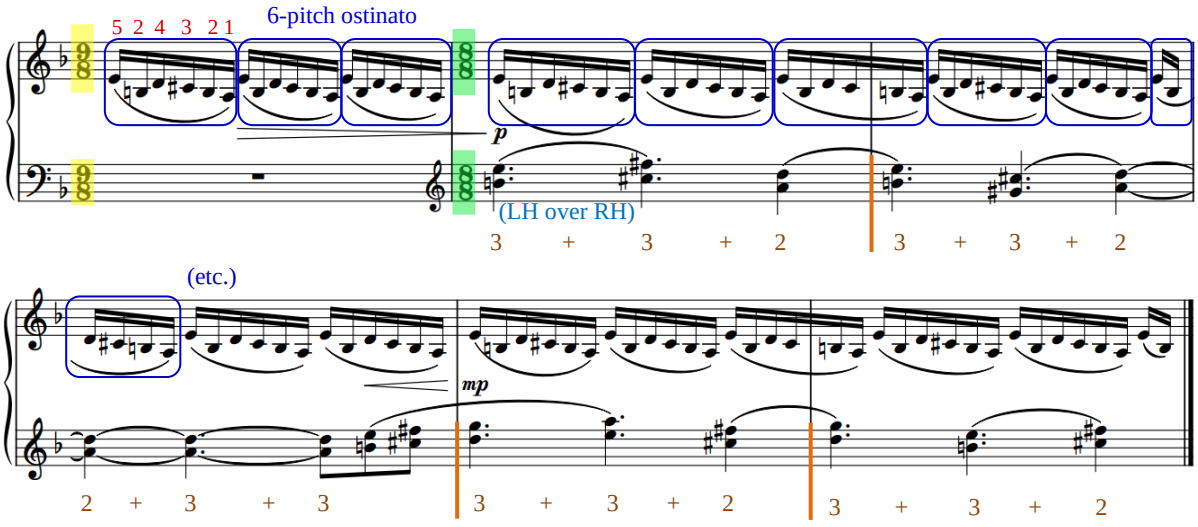
Example 6.20: “Tiger,” mm. 40–51 (End of Coda, Climax)



One of the most unique features of this piece is the metrical manipulation that occurs in the B section. Here, the right hand introduces a recurring six-pitch ostinato in sixteenth notes

(Example 6.21). The pattern is initially notated in the meter of 9/8, allowing the first note of the ostinato to align with the strong beats of the measure. However, this lasts for only one measure. After this, the meter is changed to 8/8 without adjusting the length of the ostinato. As a result, the last two sixteenth notes of the ostinato are shifted to the downbeat of the following measure. This causes the pitches of the ostinato to misalign from the strong beats of the measure. They continue to shift position two at a time, which eventually causes the pitches that originally were in the middle of the ostinato to land on the downbeat (refer to Example 6.21). To add to this metrical complexity, the left-hand melody is grouped in the following irregular rhythmic combinations, which alternate interchangeably: three + three + two and two + three + three. As if this is not already enough, the left hand plays the entire B section in the treble clef being crossed over the right hand. This creates yet another layer of complexity that makes this one of the most difficult excerpts in the entire collection of *Children of Light.*

Example 6.21: "Tiger," mm. 16–21 (Beginning of B Section)



Pedagogical Applications:

Frequent changes in time signature and metrical manipulation present the greatest pedagogical challenges of the Level 8 piece "Tiger." The A section undergoes very frequent changes in time signature, as six of them are notated during the span of its fifteen measures. It could be helpful for the student to color-code each time signature that appears in the score, they often return multiple times (refer to Example 6.19). The student could also practice counting aloud while playing, verbalizing only the macrobeats so that it is manageable to maintain at a fast tempo. Despite the frequent changes in time signature, the A section is considerably more accessible to learn and execute than the B section. This is a result of its very patterned behavior and constant broken fifth accompaniment in the left hand. Regardless of the time signature being used, each downbeat in the A section feels strong, settled, and secure.

Interestingly, the metrical challenges of the B section are quite the opposite of the A section. Of its twelve measures, two of them are notated in 9/8 time, and the remaining ten are notated in 8/8 time. Therefore, on the surface, the B section appears to be much more metrically stable than the A section. However, upon closer examination, it becomes evident that the B section is deceptively unstable, as discussed in the final paragraph of the compositional overview. To achieve successful coordination between the hands, it could be helpful for the teacher to implement a step-by-step process that begins with promoting a cognitive understanding of this metrical manipulation. The teacher can have the student play and count the left hand alone to establish the groups of two and three in each measure. Following this, the teacher can use singing while playing as a strategy for coordinating the hands. This can begin with the student singing the counts on pitch while playing the left hand alone. Next, the student could play the right-hand ostinato while continuing to sing the left-hand counts on pitch. Lastly,

the student could play both hands while singing the left-hand counts. Incorporating the concept of singing while playing will help the student to develop a thorough understanding of how the two hands fit together, which will make it more accessible to understand and physically execute.

Children of Light

Title: Polar Bear

Level: 8

Tempo: *With affection* (♩ = 80)

Meter: 4/4, 5/4, 5/8, 7/8, 3/4

Form: Ternary

Key Signature: 1 sharp (with key signature changes to 3 flats, 6 flats, and 2 flats)

Pages: 6

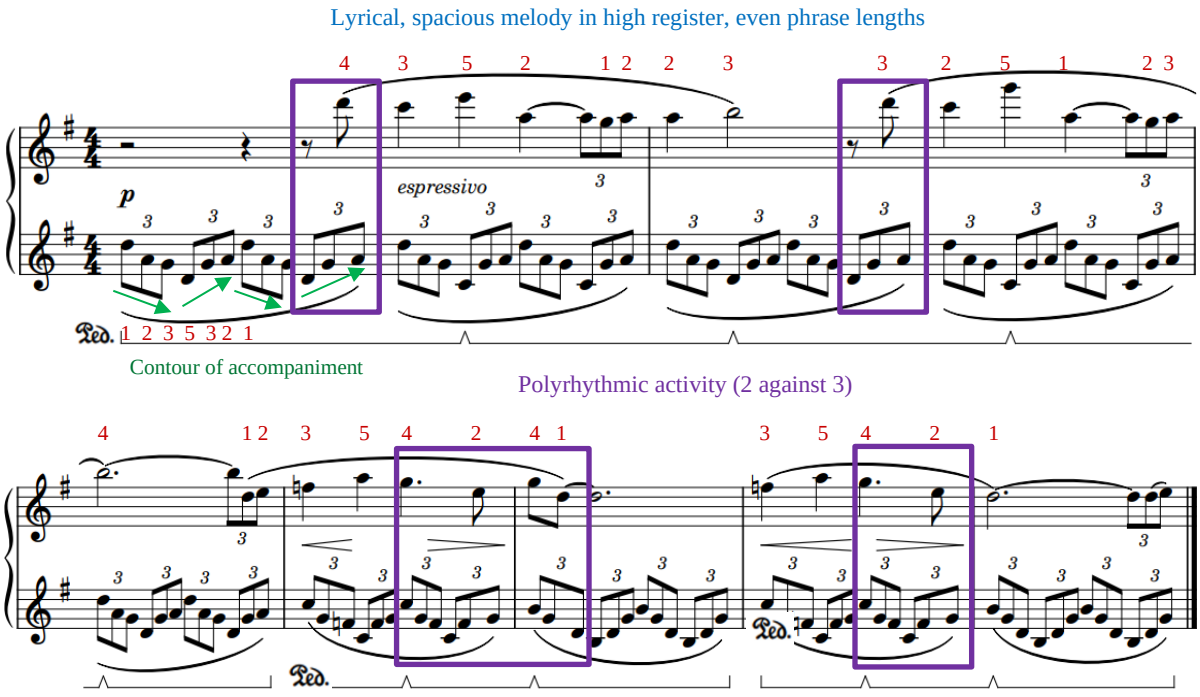
Compositional Overview:

"Polar Bear" is a Level 8 piece with a gentle, delicate, and expressive temperament. The frequent changes to the key signature, inclusion of both regular and irregular meters, extended ternary form, and page length make this piece the most difficult selection in *Children of Light.* With its ostinato accompaniments, lyrical melodic lines, and naturally flowing meter changes, this piece reflects the styles of minimalism, neo-romanticism, and the Japanese aesthetic of timelessness.

Despite the meandering quality of this piece, its ternary form is clearly defined by the compositional elements of meter and key signature. The A sections are notated almost entirely in the regular meter of 4/4. Additionally, one key signature is maintained throughout the duration of these sections: one sharp in the opening A section and two flats in the closing A section. The consistency of the meter and time signature within each A section provides a sense of stability. By contrast, the B section is notated primarily in the irregular meter of 5/8 and undergoes several key signature changes, as it begins with three flats, transitions to six flats, and ends with two flats. The unsteadiness of its irregular meter and harmonic wandering through several key signatures generate a sense of instability in the B section, which juxtaposes the stability of the A sections.

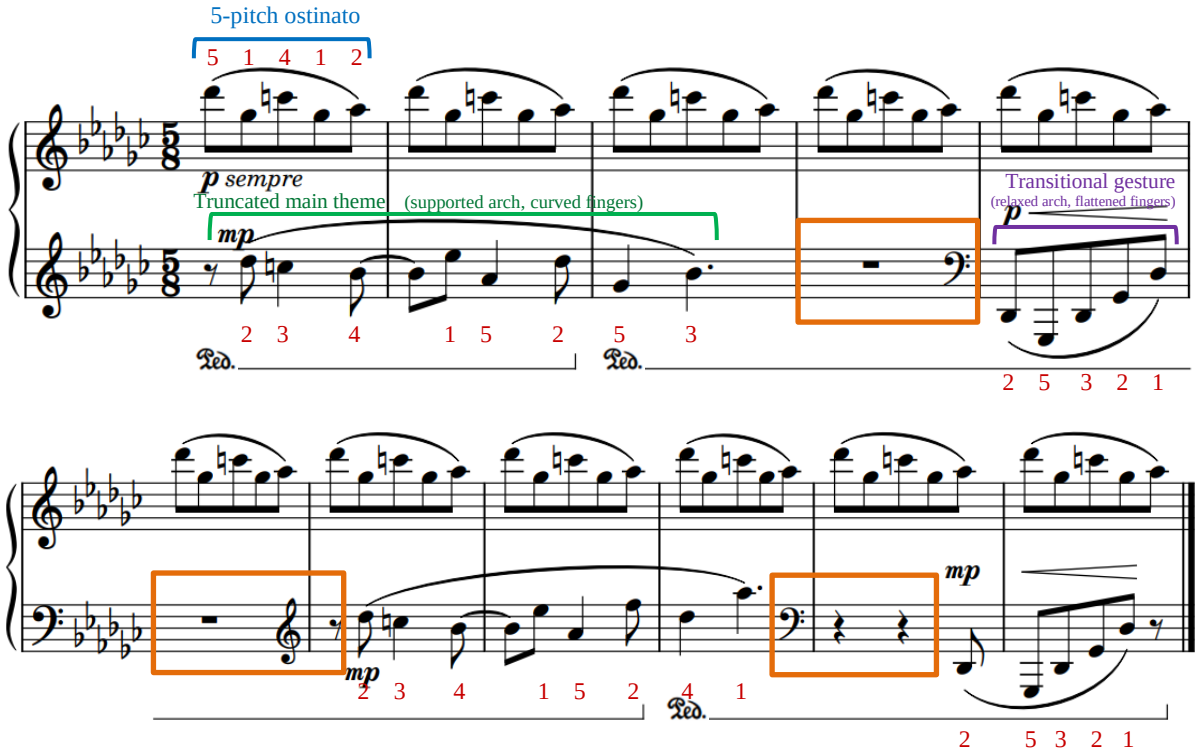
Several compositional characteristics distinguish the A sections. In terms of texture, a rippling triplet accompaniment is played by the left hand with long, lyrical melodic lines in the right hand. While the specific pitches of this accompaniment pattern vary, the rhythm and contour remain the same. The triplet accompaniment always begins with the highest pitch, descends to the lowest, and ascends back up to the highest. This pattern occurs twice per measure, and the specific pitches used in the pattern change within the of each measure (Example 6.22). The melodic lines in the A section are spacious, lyrical, and high in register. Phrase lengths are four measures in length and can easily be divided into two pairs of two measures. Rhythmically, several brief moments of polyrhythmic activity occur between the hands, with the right hand playing duple subdivisions and the left hand playing triple subdivisions. From an aural perspective, the A sections evoke a peaceful and gentle sense of activity that suggests a polar bear preparing for hibernation.

Example 6.22: “Polar Bear,” mm. 1–9 (Beginning of A Section)



In contrast to the lyricism and rippling accompaniment of the A section, the B section contains brief melodic fragments and a more stationary ostinato accompaniment. In addition to the meter changing from regular to irregular in the B section, the accompaniment also shifts from the left hand to right hand. This five-pitch ostinato maintains the same intervallic content in every measure of the B section, despite moving through several different key signatures. In terms of melodic content, the brief melodic fragments can be categorized in two primary roles: truncated statements of the main theme and transitional gestures with widely-spaced intervals (Example 6.23). These two types of fragments often alternate with each other, and they are consistently separated by one to two measures of rest while the right-hand ostinato plays continuously. The aural effect is dream-like and fleeting, which possibly represents the polar bear sleeping deeply during hibernation.

Example 6.23: "Polar Bear," mm. 41–51 (Middle of B Section)

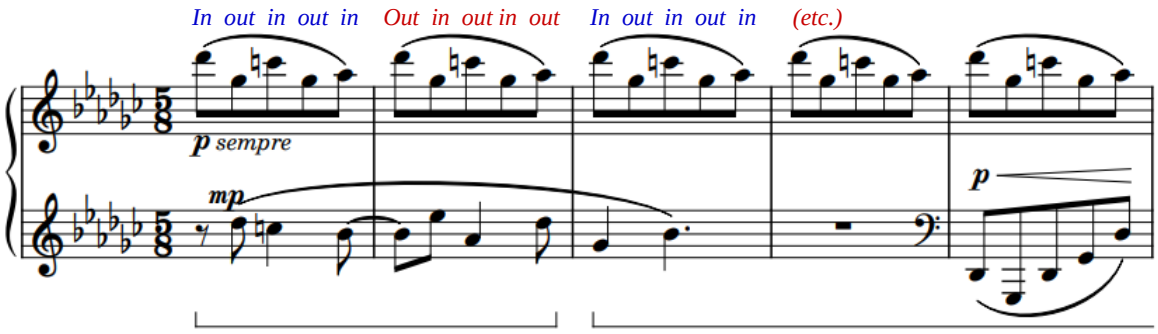


Pedagogical Applications:

Considering the ostinati and repetitive patterns that dominate the accompaniment of the Level 8 piece "Polar Bear," it is important to utilize playing techniques that promote physical relaxation and prevent the buildup of tension. In the A section, the rippling left-hand accompaniment spans the range of an octave or a ninth. To prevent the hand from locking, it could be helpful to engage the wrist in a lateral motion that carries the hand from the lowest to highest pitch of the pattern. This will promote a relaxed position of the hand, providing freedom from tension and the stamina needed to continuously play repetitive patterns for an extended period of time.

In the B section, the five-pitch ostinato calls for a different playing technique. As the range of pitches only spans the interval of a fifth, the hand does not need to stretch wider than a five-finger position. However, it is still possible for the wrist to lock if the ostinato is played exclusively from the fingers. To prevent this from occurring, it could be helpful to use an "in and out" motion originating from the elbow. Rather than depressing each key directly from above, this technique involves using a sliding motion to depress the keys. If the first pitch of the ostinato slides inwards towards the fallboard, the second pitch would slide outwards away from the fallboard. This motion of sliding in and out of the keys would continually alternate throughout the B section (Example 6.24). Incorporating this technique allows the hand, wrist, and forearm to be in continuous motion, which promotes physical freedom and lasting stamina.

Example 6.24: “Polar Bear,” mm. 41–45 (B Section)



This piece is useful to reinforce how specific physical gestures generate distinctive sounds and tone qualities. The melody and accompaniment of this piece should evoke different aural effects. This can be achieved by using two specific touches to play these layers. To create a subtle, atmospheric, and less defined sound in the accompaniment, the student could play with a somewhat relaxed arch and slightly elongated fingers about halfway into the keys. The resulting sound will provide an effective aural backdrop for the piece. To ensure successful projection of the melody, the student could use a supported arch and strong, curved fingers to press deeply into the keys. This, in conjunction with a follow-through motion, will produce a well-defined, ringing tone that clearly projects over the accompaniment. Throughout the A section, the melody is played by the right hand and the accompaniment by the left hand. Therefore, each hand is designated to use one touch. In the B section, however, the left hand alternates between truncations of the main theme (melody) and transitional gestures (accompaniment). Here, it would be appropriate for the left hand to alternate between these two touches in the following manner: for truncations of the melody, use a supported arch and curved fingers; and for transitional gestures, use a relaxed arch and slightly elongated fingers (refer to Example 6.23).

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Summary

Karen Tanaka (b. 1961) is a Japanese composer whose devotion to nature and the environment is central to her compositional works. Born in Tokyo, she began her musical studies with piano lessons at the age of four and composition lessons at the age of ten. Tanaka spent the first twenty-five years of her life in Japan, which culminated with her studies at the Toho Gakuen School of Music from 1982 to 1986. There, she studied piano with Nobuko Amada and composition with Akira Miyoshi. She moved to Paris in 1986 to study spectral music with the composer Tristan Murail and work as an intern at the Institute for Music Research and Coordination in Acoustics/Music (IRCAM). Based in Paris for nearly twenty years, Tanaka moved to the United States in 2005 and currently teaches composition at the California Institute of the Arts. As a composer, she has earned numerous awards and accolades, particularly for her orchestral works and film scores. Tanaka's career continues to thrive, as she is actively composing and frequently receives commissions for new works.

The compositional style of Karen Tanaka features elements of modernism, minimalism, neo-romanticism, and French impressionism. While some of these styles are used during specific periods of Tanaka's career, others span a wide range. For example, her modernist style is evident primarily in her early works (ca. 1986–1991), and her neo-romantic style emerges in a more concentrated way in recent works (ca. 2011–present). By contrast, Tanaka's incorporation of the minimalistic style spans a considerably longer range, beginning in the mid-1990s and continuing through the present. Similarly, elements of French impressionism are found throughout Tanaka's entire compositional career, including extensive use of the sustain pedal, an emphasis on timbre, colors, and tone quality, and scoring tonal harmonies in a non-tonal context. In addition, Tanaka

also incorporates into her compositions the Japanese aesthetics of *ma*, timelessness, stretched time, and honoring nature.

Tanaka's relationship to nature and the environment is an integral focus in her compositions. Themes of nature are found in the majority of her works, with a particular focus on crystals, the refraction of light, and flowing water. These themes are found in such works as the *Crystalline* series for solo piano (1988, 1996, 2000), *Prismes* for orchestra (1984), *Water and Stone* for chamber ensemble (1999), and *Water Dance* for solo piano (2008). By the turn of the millennium, Tanaka's concern for the environment and issues such as pollution, deforestation, and endangered animals became increasingly more important in her compositional output. Major contributions to this initiative include two of Tanaka's pedagogical piano collections. *Children of Light* (1999), the subject of this study, honors twenty endangered species and five threatened environments, and *Our Planet Earth* (2011) emphasizes topics such as the ocean, solar and wind energy, magma, and the ozone layer.

The piano works of Karen Tanaka represent a considerable portion of her compositional output. Among her standard solo piano works are the *Crystalline* series, the three-movement work *Water Dance*, two books of *Techno Etudes*, and four freestanding pieces. Her pedagogical piano repertoire includes four large-scale collections: *The Zoo in the Sky* (1995), *Children of Light* (1999), *Our Planet Earth* (2011), and *Love in the Wind* (2017), in addition to three freestanding pieces.

The intermediate piano collection *Children of Light* represents Tanaka's earliest efforts to encourage environmental action through the study of her music. Consisting of twenty-five pieces ranging from Levels 3 through 8 in reference to Jane Magrath's leveling system, the collection explores themes of endangered animals and the environment. Twenty animals from the *1996*

IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals were selected by the composer to serve as titles for the pieces, and the five remaining pieces honor a variety of environments throughout the world. These selections are brief in length and highlight the elements of Tanaka's compositional style, including modernism, minimalism, neo-romanticism, French impressionism, and Japanese aesthetic influences.

Karen Tanaka's versatility as a composer is reflected in her works for orchestra, solo piano, piano and orchestra, choir, chamber ensembles, electroacoustics, and film. Her commitment to nature and the environment is integral to her musical identity, permeating through all these musical genres. As both a woman and Asian composer, Tanaka represents two demographics that have been historically overlooked and underrepresented. Despite her prolific output as a composer and numerous honors and awards for her works, Karen Tanaka remains relatively ambiguous in the field of music. Her significant contributions to the piano repertoire, in particular the pedagogical piano repertoire, are substantial and worthy of knowing, teaching, and performing in the twenty-first century and beyond.

Recommendations for Further Research

Given the limited scholarly research on the life and works of Karen Tanaka, opportunities for further research are abundant and multifarious. A list of recommendations is provided below.

1. Complete stylistic and pedagogical analyses of Tanaka's three other pedagogical piano collections: *The Zoo in the Sky* (1995), *Our Planet Earth* (2011), and *Love in the Wind* (2017).
2. Prepare a complete recording of the twenty-five pieces in *Children of Light*. Currently, two recordings exist of excerpts from *Children of Light*. These include Signe Bakke's

album *Crystalline: Piano Music by Karen Tanaka*, featuring eight selections and Becky Billock's album *Mother Earth,* featuring five selections.[102, 103] A complete recording of the entire collection would serve as an invaluable resource for teachers and performers alike.

3. Consult with the composer regarding suggested fingerings for each piece in *Children of Light.* Publishing a second edition of the collection that includes fingerings would be incredibly valuable, as it would make the collection more practical and accessible for piano teachers to use with their students.
4. Complete stylistic and performance analyses of Tanaka's piano concerti *Anamorphose* (1986) and *Hommage en cristal* (1991). Additionally, recording these works would be a valuable contribution to the field. Currently, no recordings exist. Doing so would bring visibility and awareness to these unique works.
5. Conduct an interview with Karen Tanaka to obtain more detailed biographical information about her early life in Japan, university years at the Toho Gakuen School of Music in Tokyo, early professional years in France and Italy, and relocation to the United States through the present. Much information remains to be known about the composer's life and musical training. Pending the composer's availability and willingness to participate in an interview, this information would be a significant contribution to the field, promoting her visibility and reputation as an active and living contemporary composer.

[102] *Crystalline: Piano Music by Karen Tanaka*, Signe Bakke, 2L (Lindberg Lyd) 2L74, 2011, CD.
[103] *Mother Earth*, Becky Billock (Becky Billock) 2019, CD.

6. Complete a study comparing the ways in which themes of nature are used in the works of Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu (1930–1996) with the works of Karen Tanaka (b. 1961). Both composers are Japanese and frequently use themes of nature in their works. As Takemitsu precedes Tanaka by a generation, it would be interesting to pursue his possible influences on Tanaka's compositional career. It would also be enriching to compare their approaches of how natural themes are conveyed in their music.

These suggestions represent a fraction of the opportunities available for further research and scholarly activity on Karen Tanaka. Despite her prolific activity as a living composer and being highly sought-after for new commissions, Tanaka's visibility and reputation tend to be limited to specific circles. She has been included in discussions of contemporary Japanese composers and Asian women composers, but her influence reaches far beyond the limitations of these classifications. Publishing research on Tanaka, actively promoting her works, including her pedagogical repertoire in mainstream piano curriculum, and teaching her works to future generations of students will encourage the widespread prominence and respect that Tanaka and her music deserve.

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Appendix A

Complete Listing of Karen Tanaka's Piano Works

Standard Solo Repertoire:

- Crystalline (1988)
- Crystalline II (1996)
- Crystalline III (2000)
- Techno Etudes (2000)
- Water Dance (2008)
- Blue Crystal (2014)
- Who Stole the Tarts? (2016)
- Techno Etudes II (2020)
- Rose Crystal (2022)
- Sensation (2022)

Pedagogical Repertoire:

- The Zoo in the Sky (1995)
- Children of Light (1999)
- Lavender Field (2000)
- Northern Lights (2002)
- Our Planet Earth (2011)
- Masquerade (2013)
- Love in the Wind (2017)

Piano Concerti:

- Anamorphose (1986), for piano and orchestra
- Hommage en cristal (1991), for piano and string orchestra

Chamber Music (works including piano):

- Invisible Curve (1996), for flute, violin, viola, cello, and piano
- Always in My Heart (1999), for clarinet and piano
- Ocean (2003), for violin and piano
- Herb Garden (2005), for piano four hands
- Silent Ocean (2005), for trumpet and piano
- Enchanted Forest (2013), for horn and piano
- Sleep My Child (2013), S.A.T.B. choir and piano
- Once Upon a Time (2021), for flute and piano

Appendix B

Table of Contents Listing of *Children of Light* (1999) as Presented in the Musical Score

Child of Light 1

1. Blue Planet
2. Sea Turtle
3. Dugong
4. Coral Reef
5. Blue Whale

Child of Light 2

6. Green Paradise
7. Mountain Gorilla
8. Black Rhinoceros
9. Grevy's Zebra
10. African Elephant

Child of Light 3

11. Prisms in the Forest
12. Wild Water Buffalo
13. Giant Panda
14. Chinese Alligator
15. Tiger

Child of Light 4

16. Air
17. Red-Faced Parrot
18. Kiwi
19. Crested Ibis
20. Crowned Eagle

Child of Light 5

21. Northern Lights
22. Galapagos Land Iguana
23. Marsupial Mole
24. Florida Panther
25. Polar Bear

Appendix C

Complete Leveled Listing of Pieces in *Children of Light* (1999) in Increasing Order of Difficulty

Level 3	Green Paradise
Level 4	Blue Planet
	Sea Turtle
	African Elephant
Level 5	Prisms in the Forest
Level 6	Dugong
	Giant Panda
	Wild Water Buffalo
	Coral Reef
	Red-Faced Parrot
	Air
	Grevy's Zebra
	Kiwi
Level 7	Black Rhinoceros
	Blue Whale
	Chinese Alligator
	Northern Lights
	Mountain Gorilla
Level 8	Marsupial Mole
	Crested Ibis
	Crowned Eagle
	Florida Panther
	Galapagos Land Iguana
	Tiger
	Polar Bear