

MAURICE BESLY

Op. 28

Studies in Tone-Colour

Ten Tone Pictures
for Piano



Three shillings net



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To BRIAN NASH, Esq.
In Gratitude and Friendship

—

...*“For we have sailed upon the self-same quest
And watched the stars together, you and I.”*

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INTRODUCTION

32/22

These little piano pieces are designed as studies in Tone-Colour and Phrasing. They are of moderate difficulty, corresponding to the intermediate standard of our Public Examinations in Music.

TO NE-COLOUR

“Tone-Colour” is the result that is aimed at in the several excellent books which have been written on the art of touch. No attempt is here made to add anything to the searching study and wide experience that have contributed such works to our music-shelves; but one point may be stressed yet again, namely, the importance of listening to and criticising the tone-colour which we produce from the piano. The key-board of a modern piano is a very sensitive piece of mechanism; it must be “touched,” not hit, if a beautiful tone-colour is to be produced, and the warmth and depth of that colour, even the colour itself, depends first upon how we actually “touch” the keys, and then upon the use of the pedals.

PEDALLING

There are several books on pedalling full of information and help, so that here again only one point need be emphasized, namely, that the ear, and not the eye, must be trained in order to acquire pedalling facility and excellence. In the following pieces, therefore, very few pedalling marks will be found, for *music is sound*, and only with our ears can we appreciate sound. It must be realised that the sustaining pedal is an integral part of the modern piano, and one which should be in constant use. The only sure guide in pedalling is the ear, to assist which is beyond the art of the engraver and printer.

PHRASING

The meaning of the word “phrasing” in music is probably best explained by saying that phrases correspond to the sentences and phrases in literary composition. Phrases, like sentences, may be of varying length, but they are more or less complete in themselves; and just as the meaning of any part of a poem or story depends upon the way in which the sentences hold together, so the meaning of a musical composition depends very largely upon the inter-relation of the various phrases.

If you will look at the reproduction of a manuscript, or even at an early printed copy, of Bach or Beethoven you will see that the phrasing is not as a rule clearly indicated, but left to the musicianship of the performer. Nowadays the performer’s task is made easier, and phrasing, as well as nuances of tempo and expression, are clearly defined. In the pages that follow, the actual marks and signs show exactly how the music is intended to sound. Each phrase is marked by a curved line or “slur” and represents a complete musical thought. The notes composing any phrase are connected and must be made to sound so. All the notes of phrases are not of equal importance or equal

accent, any more than every word of a sentence is equally important or accented. This will be quite clear if you will read aloud this verse of Shelley :—

“ Music when soft voices die
Vibrates in the Memory :
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.”

Or again, the wonderful description in Bunyan’s “ Pilgrim’s Progress ” of the summons of Mr. Valiant to Heaven :—

“ When the day that he must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the riverside, into which, as he went, he said ‘ Death, where is thy sting ? ’ And as he went down deeper he said ‘ Grave, where is thy victory ? ’ So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side.”

Thus, in playing any musical composition you must express the various phrases so as to make each intelligible in itself, and in relation to what precedes and what follows it. You must find out particularly where the climax is, and work up to and away from it, with a full understanding of the meaning of the whole.

One or two general principles may be applied to phrasing, making due allowance for the exceptions which prove the rule.

1. Do not accent the last syllable or note of any phrase unless such accent is specifically marked and intended.
2. When two notes are grouped together the first note is slightly more accented than the second. This rule holds good even when the second note is longer than the first. In such cases the second note is, in actual practice, slightly curtailed.
3. When a curved line is drawn over two long notes, or notes in slow tempo, it is merely a legato sign, and the second note is not shortened.
4. Phrases do not always coincide with the rhythmic divisions of a bar. Never allow such cross-phrasing to interfere with rhythm.

The pieces which follow are of three kinds :—

- (a) Dance forms, *e.g.*, minuet or waltz.
- (b) Song form.
- (c) Impressionistic.

The phrasing in (a) and (b) is comparatively easy and straightforward. In (c) it is more difficult and even more important, for, whereas even the more simple dance and song forms require careful phrasing, impressionistic music is quite unintelligible unless it is phrased in a musicianly manner.

Whatever you play, first understand the meaning yourself, and then try to convey that meaning to others.

M. B.

Hampton Court

A Minuet, in the usual form : A, B, A ; that is, a first tune, A (here in G major) followed by a second, B (here in the relative minor key) and then a repetition of A.

In A, the first part consists of two 4-bar phrases, while the last 16 bars consist of shorter phrases in sequence, that is, phrases that are similar but higher or lower in the scale. Such sequences are often met with, and seem of themselves to suggest *crescendo* or *diminuendo* according to whether they ascend or descend.

In B, you will notice that the tune is always *legato* and the accompaniment generally *non-legato*. In the first eight bars the tune is played by the right hand, and in the last eight bars by the left.

This piece is, in fact, a study more for the left hand than the right, for in A the bass part is particularly important and the descending scales of G major and E minor and the frequent upward jumps of the octave or seventh must be artistically phrased and not merely played as a series of notes.

Hampton Court

Tempo di minuetto

PIANO

The first system of musical notation for the piano. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The music begins with a forte (f) dynamic. The right hand plays a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment of quarter notes.

The second system of musical notation, continuing the piece. The melodic line in the right hand continues with grace notes and slurs, while the bass line maintains its accompaniment pattern.

The third system of musical notation, showing further development of the melodic and accompaniment lines.

The fourth system of musical notation, concluding the piece with a final cadence in the right hand and a sustained bass line.

First system of musical notation. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). The piece begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment of quarter notes.

Second system of musical notation. The melodic line in the right hand continues with more complex rhythmic patterns, including some beamed sixteenth notes. The left hand accompaniment remains consistent.

Third system of musical notation. The right hand melody becomes more active with frequent sixteenth-note runs. The left hand accompaniment continues with quarter notes.

Fourth system of musical notation. The right hand features several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' in a circle) over eighth notes. The dynamic changes to mezzo-forte (*mf*). The instruction *non legato* is written below the staff. The left hand accompaniment continues.

Fifth system of musical notation. The right hand includes a four-note group (marked with a '4') and a sequence of notes with fingering numbers 1 and 2. The left hand accompaniment continues.

più f

legato ed espressivo sempre

1 4 1 4 1

f

marcato sempre il basso

più forte e crescendo

ff rit - en - u - to

Wind in the Reeds

This piece tries to suggest by sound what a poet might convey if he wrote stanzas on this idea. Such music is sometimes called "impressionistic" or "atmospheric," as opposed to "pure music," which has no "programme" or picture. The little wailing phrase which occurs again and again—after the *poco piu mosso* interlude it is in the left hand—must be carefully played, the last quaver being very gently "touched." Always remember that the end of any phrase, unless it is an actual climax, is lighter than the note before it, just as the last syllable of so many words is light, e.g. Pansy, Brighton, Clovelly, Apple. Towards the end is a little passage marked *senza tempo*, that is to say without any number of definite beats, but each note having its true value.

END

Wind in the Reeds

Poco lento e con tristezza

PIANO

pp

p

Ped. sempre * *Ped.* * *Ped.* *

simile

simile

a tempo poco più mosso

mf
R.H.

Tempo I
pp

p

Ped. * *Ped.* * *simile*

R.H.

senza tempo (quasi cadenza)

mf

R.H.

a tempo

accel e cresc.

meno mosso

pp

ppp

Moonrise on the Lagoons

"I take an oar and make a rift
In the soft tide of the lagoons."

—WILLIAM SHARP.

A gentle flowing tune intended to suggest the gentle movement of a boat on the water. The phrasing is quite simple. Notice how at the end the tune is given to the left hand, as if played on a 'cello.

Tempo di barcarolle

PIANO

The first system of musical notation is for the piano. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'Tempo di barcarolle' and the dynamics are 'mf'. The music features a flowing melody in the right hand with a 5/2 time signature indicated above the first measure. The left hand provides a simple accompaniment with chords and single notes. A large slur covers the first two measures of the right hand.

The second system continues the piano piece. The right hand melody flows through several measures, with a slur spanning across them. The left hand accompaniment remains consistent, providing a steady harmonic foundation.

The third system shows the continuation of the piano piece. The right hand melody moves through various intervals, and the left hand accompaniment follows with chords and single notes. A slur is present over the first two measures of the right hand.

The fourth system concludes the piano piece. The right hand melody ends with a final flourish, and the left hand accompaniment provides a concluding chord. The dynamics are marked 'poco più f'.

mf

4 2 4 2 5 2 5 2 4 2

poco allarg. a tempo mf

gve ^{ped.} gve *

espressivo

3 1 4 1 5 2 3 1 5 2 3 1 5 4 5 3

poco cantabile ppp

Porcelain

A light, wistful waltz, suggesting a dance of a little Dresden China Figure. The B flat at the end of the little run should always be slightly *tenuto*, that is held for a tiny moment, giving a rather piquant effect, quite in keeping with the title of the piece. Note, in the third section, the lift of the top E flat, and how a few bars later, the E flat is not lifted, but on the contrary slightly accented.

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Porcelain

Tempo di valse

ten.

PIANO

The first system of musical notation for 'Porcelain' is written for piano in 3/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The music starts with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) and a *ten.* (tension) marking. The right hand features a rapid ascending scale-like passage, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment of chords and single notes.

The second system continues the musical piece. The right hand plays a series of chords and eighth notes, while the left hand maintains a consistent accompaniment pattern with chords and single notes.

The third system of musical notation shows the continuation of the piece. It includes a *ten.* marking above the first measure. The right hand features a rapid ascending scale-like passage, similar to the first system, while the left hand provides accompaniment.

The fourth system concludes the piece. It features a first ending bracket labeled '1.' and a second ending bracket labeled '2.'. The first ending leads back to the beginning of the piece, while the second ending concludes it. A dynamic marking of *pp* (pianissimo) is used for the first ending. The word 'repeat' is written below the first ending. The system ends with a *p* (piano) marking.

First system of musical notation. Treble clef, bass clef, key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The system begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The right hand features a sequence of chords with fingerings: 8 1, 4 2, 4 2, and 5 5. The left hand plays a steady accompaniment of quarter notes.

Second system of musical notation. Continuation of the piece. The right hand has a *4 2* fingering. The left hand continues with quarter notes, some marked with *p.*

Third system of musical notation. Includes first and second endings. The first ending is marked *1.* and the second ending is marked *2.*. A *repeat pp* instruction is placed between the endings. The first ending concludes with a *f* dynamic marking. The left hand accompaniment includes *p.* markings.

Fourth system of musical notation. The right hand features a *4* fingering. The system includes a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic marking. The left hand accompaniment includes *p.* markings.

Fifth system of musical notation. The system concludes with a *rit.* (ritardando) instruction. The right hand has a *p* dynamic marking. The left hand accompaniment includes *p.* markings.

delicatissimo

pp

ten.

p.

ten.

p.

rit.

sempre piu pp

ff

Lake Louise

"The lake lay blue below the hill."

—MARY COLERIDGE.

Lake Louise is one of the loveliest sights in the world—bright blue below snow-clad pinnacles of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. Very cold it is, and very quiet. Just in this cold and quiet way must this little piece be played. The phrasing needs no explanation. The last two bars should fade away to nothing (*a niente*).

Moderato tranquillo

PIANO

First system of musical notation for 'Lake Louise'. The piece is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is 'Moderato tranquillo'. The first system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a melodic line marked with fingering numbers 1, 5, 2, 4, 2, 3. The bass staff provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. The dynamic marking is *mf espressivo sempre*. The system concludes with a *p* (piano) dynamic marking.

Second system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melodic line with a *poco cresc.* (poco crescendo) marking. The bass staff continues with harmonic accompaniment. The system ends with a *p* dynamic marking.

Third system of musical notation. The treble staff features a melodic line with fingering numbers 1, 2, 1. The bass staff continues with chords and single notes. The system concludes with a *p* dynamic marking.

Fourth system of musical notation, the final system of the piece. The treble staff features a melodic line with a *dim.* (diminuendo) marking and a *a tempo* marking. The bass staff continues with harmonic accompaniment. The system concludes with a *p* dynamic marking.

pp sempre

mf

più f

dolce

R.H.

A Girl with a Rose in her Hair

In playing this piece, try to picture to yourself a Spanish Dancer. The music is marked *languido* ("languidly") *e rubato sempre* ("and always borrowing the time from one part of a phrase and paying it back in another"). That is to say, the phrases should not be strict, but free, yet always rhythmical. Rhythm is the main essential of a dance, but good dancing is never rigid. One phrase needs a word of explanation, the one which occurs first in bar 6. Here the top E is lifted, and an almost imperceptible break is made after it. This device is most commonly written for stringed instruments, but is effective on the piano if beautifully "touched."

The middle section in A minor contains a technical point known as "rotary motion." For further explanation of this turning of the fore-arm see Tobias Matthay's "Muscular Relaxation Studies," page 40 and Czerny's.

finis

A Girl with a Rose in her Hair

PIANO

Languido e rubato sempre

mf

simile

simile

dim. accel.

poco rit.

accel. a tempo f piu f rit.

ff a tempo dim.

p rit.

First system of the musical score. The treble clef contains a melodic line with triplets and slurs, including fingerings 2, 1, 4, and 3. The bass clef provides a harmonic accompaniment. The dynamic marking is *P delicatissimo*.

Second system of the musical score. The treble clef continues the melodic line with slurs and fingerings. The bass clef accompaniment is consistent. The dynamic marking changes to *f*.

Third system of the musical score. The treble clef features a melodic line with slurs and fingerings. The bass clef accompaniment includes a *4 p.* marking. Dynamic markings include *pp*, *mf*, *rit.*, and *a tempo*.

Fourth system of the musical score. The treble clef continues the melodic line with slurs and fingerings. The bass clef accompaniment includes a *cresc.* marking.

Fifth system of the musical score. The treble clef continues the melodic line with slurs and fingerings. The bass clef accompaniment includes a *rit.* marking. Dynamic markings include *quasi f*, *p*, and *dim.*

Tempo primo

ossia

The musical score consists of five systems of piano accompaniment. Each system has a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is marked 'Tempo primo'. The score includes several dynamic markings: 'f' (forte) appears in the first system, and 'meno f' (mezzo-forte) appears in the fifth system. Performance instructions include 'poco accel.' (poco accelerando) in the fifth system. Musical notations include slurs, triplets (marked with a '3'), and a 14-measure rest in the first system. The piece concludes with a final cadence in the fifth system.

3
rit.

poco accel.
f a tempo
3

sempre piu f
rit.
ff a tempo
3

dim.
3

p
rit. e dim. ten.
fff

Bed-time at the Zoo

This short piece was written in the Zoological Gardens at Sydney, overlooking the world's most beautiful harbour. It is quite difficult. The chromatic changes demand very careful pedalling, calling for very careful listening. Listen to every note, and think carefully of your tone, and how you should touch the keys to produce the tone. In these sixteen bars everything depends on your tone-colour, and your ability to convey thereby the feeling of drowsiness and peace. The first and last bars, though they look easy, are a sure test of good piano playing. Throughout, a perfect *legato* is essential: the hands must as it were creep from note to note. Before beginning to play, always prepare yourself and your audience by a moment's silence.

CHAP

Bed-time at the Zoo

PIANO

Lento non troppo e rubato sempre

sempre legatissimo

2nd Ed.

poco cresc.

*Red. tre corde **

quasi f

dim.

pp e dolcissimo

2nd Ed.

L.H. R.H.

ppp

L.H.

*Red. **

Peri and Pixie

A dance suggested by Hood's poem on Midsummer fairies, to be played with a sense of fun. Note the little *ritenuto* phrases followed at once by *a tempo*. Not until the last two lines does this piece become at all quick in tempo ; and the end looks and sounds more difficult than it is : the last run is one of the easiest on the key-board. A trick which will be found very useful in many passages is exemplified at the bottom of the second page. The low octave B must be depressed, *but not sounded again*, as soon as the left hand is free.

END

Peri and Pixie

PIANO

Leggiero sempre ma non troppo vivace

mf staccato sempre *rit.* *a tempo*

rit. *simile a tempo*

pocissimo accel. *ten.*

ten. *rit.*

Ped. *

simile

a tempo *rit.*

simile

rit. *ten*

a tempo *rit.* *f a tempo*

rit.

poco accel. - - - *molto rit.*

ff *R.H.* *L.H.*



Tempo I

mf *simile* *rit.* *a tempo* *rit.*
simile

a tempo *poco accel.* *ten.*

ten. *rit.*

8 *5* *5* *loco*
più vivo al fine
1 4 1 4 2 1

presto *1* *8* *L.H.* *fff*
Ped. *

Madonna Lilies

As the title implies, this song-like tune should be played with simple beauty, rhythmically, and free from all sentimentality. The tone-colour should be pure white and the little phrases played in gentle curves, free from all accentuations,

Andantino e semplice sempre

PIANO

con pedale sempre *simile*

simile

Ped. *

4

2 3 3 3 4 5

f

senza Ped. Ped.

simile

f

dim.

Ped. *

2 1 3

pp

Ped. *

Dawn on the Hill

The phrasing of this piece is quite easy to understand, but it is technically more difficult than in the pieces before it.

The chief point which will require attention is that the melody is divided between the hands. The right hand is usually playing the little accompaniment figure ; but now and again it plays a note of the melody, and the accompaniment figure as well. This requires very thoughtful application of touch. It is particularly difficult at the return to the main tune where the right hand ends the accompaniment figure (in the first case) on C ; then plays C as the note of the tune and then again in the accompaniment. This difficulty occurs four times and needs careful practice.

The last two bars in $5/4$ time work up to the climax of dawn actually breaking, and the left hand picks out the tune, a device which you will meet in César Franck's beautiful Chorale when you come to play it.

Note the use of the pedal at the end, which, by damping away the preceding bass notes, leaves the last chord echoing until the vibrations die away.

et cetera

Dawn on the Hill

"But look, the morn in russet mantle clad
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill."

—SHAKESPEARE.

Moderato tranquillo

PIANO

pp cantabile sempre ed espressivo il melodia

simile

ten. *ten.* *ten.*

ppp *pocissimo rit. - - -*

ped. *

p a tempo *simile*

ten. *ten.* *ten.*

ad lib.

ad. (ad lib.).....

poco a poco cresc.

*ad. **

5
 Musical score system 1, first system. Treble clef, bass clef. Key signature: one flat. Time signature: 7/8. Includes a fingering '5' and a first ending bracket.

f
 Musical score system 2, second system. Treble clef, bass clef. Key signature: one flat. Time signature: 7/8. Includes dynamic marking *f*, *Ped.*, and *simile*.

sempre più f
 Musical score system 3, third system. Treble clef, bass clef. Key signature: one flat. Time signature: 7/8. Includes dynamic marking *sempre più f* and triplet markings.

dim. e rit-en-to
senza tempo
 Musical score system 4, fourth system. Treble clef, bass clef. Key signature: one flat. Time signature: 7/8. Includes dynamic markings *dim. e rit-en-to*, *pp*, *mf poco*, and *senza tempo*. Includes *Ped.* and *R.H. 4 3 1* markings.

Tempo I
pp
 Musical score system 5, fifth system. Treble clef, bass clef. Key signature: one flat. Time signature: 7/8. Includes dynamic marking *pp*, *Tempo I*, and *simile*. Includes a *ten.* marking and a sixteenth-note group.

ten.

ten.

ten. *ten.*

poco rit.

L.H.
f allargando al fine
ff ad lib.
lunga a niente
 * *senza Ped.*