

Student Favorites

Jazzy Fun

Eleven-year old boys and girls enjoy *Manhattan Mood* by David Carr Glover, published in 1951 (Schroeder and Gunther/Associated Music Publishers). The piece features the blues style, jazzy rhythms, and ambiguous harmonies. Indications for tempo rubato, thirds, and other tempo fluctuations give the piece an improvisatory feel. The quick and unexpected changes of character add to the fun, which encourages students to practice.

The first chord of this level-three piece is a harmonically ambiguous dominant seventh built on the tonic. A melody based on the blues scale includes both major and minor scale notes. Syncopation, widely spaced registration, and a fermata all suggest improvisation.

Tempo Rubato

mf
Con Fco.

The melancholy principal theme has many dynamic changes that accentuate the bluesy melody. Pedaling should be clear and not interfere with the subtle dynamic changes. In measure 7 the half-note chord could be sustained with a half pedal.

Measures 5-9

mp *mf* *mp* *mf*

In measures 15 and 16 a crescendo and decrescendo add to the effect of walking bass line.

Measures 15-16

f *mf*

A contrasting section begins in measure 21 with surprising dotted figures in the left hand in a boogie style.

Measures 15-16

f *a little faster*

A syncopated rhythm in swing style in measures 26-29 is interspersed with the same dotted rhythm.

Measures 26-29

f

Students might find it easier to play the dotted rhythm in the bass clef on beats two and four of measure 30 in the right hand.

Measure 30

The piece ends as it began, with a blues melody that fades away at each end of the keyboard.

mp *pp* *ppp*
rit. *8va.* *8vb.*

— Donald Alfano
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