

Pianorama 2023 - Advanced Level  
Conductor's Notes  
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**Blue Tango**

This is written by the same composer who wrote *Sleigh Ride*, Leroy Anderson!

Watch this video on YouTube: [Blue Tango](#). This has the sultrier tempo and character that we'll be going for. Watch it a few times so you can listen to the dialogue between the legato melody and the chirpy interjections, as well as to watch the dancers and their tango movements.

This duet is an orchestral reduction, so every note you play is imitating an orchestral instrument. The legato melody is usually the strings. The chirpy countermelody is often highlighted by flutes and piccolo.

Easy steady tempo throughout, Quarter = 116-120.

Please write in measure numbers. There are 86 in total, and they do not line up line-by-line between the two parts.

**Primo notes**

Opening and throughout: be sure to articulate the accents and two-note slurs. If it helps, draw a staccato dot over the second note at the end of each slur. Be sure to use consistent fingering that works for you every time.

Grace notes are snappy and fast, before the beat. They are small, so double-check your accidentals! The one in m. 24 is an F-sharp.

Pick up to Rehearsal 4 – very singing. You have the melody now.

Rehearsal 5 – Be careful to watch for C-naturals versus C sharps!

**Secondo notes**

You have the fun tango rhythm in your left hand!

Pedal: most measures, please pedal the first two beats only. Lift on beats 3 and 4. Of course, exceptions would be in measures like 45 and 83, which have a staccato downbeat. Once we all get together for rehearsals, we'll decide on the pedal from Rehearsal 6 to the end. Stay flexible. Usually in larger numbers, the less pedal the better.

Pick up to Rehearsal 1 – you have the melody.

Rehearsal 2 – Pay close attention to when you have a C natural versus a C sharp! This feature is what makes it bluesy.

Rehearsal 4 – now you have the chirping countermelody. Try to use a clear articulation in your RH with the two note slurs, like the primos introduced. This is a little harder for you because you have a chord to hold in the thumb and 2<sup>nd</sup> finger! You can lift that inner chord when you come off the slur on top.

## **Sicilienne, Op. 78**

Gabriel Fauré wrote this beautiful work originally for a stage production. It is most often played as a cello/piano duo. Watch this performance [Sicilienne for orchestra](#) (at the 8:58 mark) on YouTube. I couldn't find one I liked for piano duet, so listen to this one and use your imagination for how our arrangement reflects this sound picture.

It has a Sicilian dotted rhythm, creating a comforting rocking feel. Sixteenths can be played in a strum-like style. Staccatos are not too short. They are plucked in the strings and on the harp.

**Tempo considerations:** Dotted Quarter = 48.

Fauré was known for disliking ritards added to his music. Some performers take this too far and play his music completely straight. We will add subtle ritards only at the very ends of measures 25, 58, and 71. Just watch.

Also watch for the placing of the last chord. It will be ever so slightly placed, perfectly together!

### **Primo notes**

M. 2 – please write in p-f. We'll be a little fuller the second time on the repeat.

M. 27 – the last note should be a tied D eighth note.

### **Secondo notes**

Pedal – light pedal in the beginning is good, just be sure to play a soft dynamic.

At m. 36 (the key change) more pedal can be used. You will need to change the pedal twice per bar.

M. 58 will need clean, more frequent pedal changes along with the harmony.

Measure 66 – please bring out the lowest bass notes as a legato countermelody. The first two should have downward stems on them.

**Les Chevaux de Bois**, by Georges Bizet, is part of a set of 12 children's duets. The title means "The Merry-Go-Round." It is marked as a Scherzo, so we'll try to keep it light-hearted, joking, and a little menacing in its minor mode.

Dynamics will be key in achieving the character in this duet. It might help to circle, highlight, and draw hairpins to emphasize the quick dynamic changes. Most importantly, remember to return to the piano dynamic quickly where marked.

Tempo stays steady throughout, dotted Quarter = 130. This will need metronome practice to work your way up to that speed.

### **Primo notes**

Opening articulation – accentuate the two-note slur. Play the second note of the slur staccato.

Voice the RH a bit louder than the LH.

### **Secondo notes**

Pedal – Measures 53, 57, 61, and 65: hold pedal for only one measure (two counts), then release on the downbeat of the next measure. Follow all other pedal markings. We won't know until we're all together how the pedaling will sound, so stay flexible.

Una corda pedal on the last 5 measures if you can do it!