Nicholai Kapustin’s *Eight Concert Etudes*, Op. 40: Reflections on Analysis, Practice, and Performance

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Music Arts
Graduate Department
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Abstract

Nicholai Kapustin (1937-), a Ukrainian composer whose music amalgamates the Western classical tradition with jazz idioms, is becoming increasingly acclaimed in recent years. His works are known for the physical challenge they impose upon the player due to their complexity that is often accompanied by fast tempi. No less formidable, however, is the challenge to discover the conceptual binding that is needed to capture the overarching sense of purpose within a given piece and communicate it in performance.

One of the most effective approaches in performing Kapustin’s music is to take advantage of the structure upon which his compositions are based, as it can allow a classically trained performer to utilize previously developed analytical skills. Although analytical study is an asset for virtually any type of music, the performance of Kapustin’s music especially can benefit from analysis owing to its dense and active textures, rhythmic continuity, and varied repetition of relatively homogeneous melodic material. This research encourages regular involvement in analysis and internalizing the music away from the instrument.
An analysis of Kapustin’s *Eight Concert Etudes*, Op. 40 is provided along with the discussion of performance issues that are related to the analysis. These include solidifying the left hand (Etude No. 5), expressing characters through the varying rhythmic values of the melody and accents (Etude No. 6), and isolating various thematic components while simultaneously strengthening their inter-connections (Etudes Nos. 7 and 8). In addition, the research examines some of the psychological implications of analysis, exploring the ways in which analysis can help the performer to be attentive and engaged in the moment. Furthermore, in order to help one take pleasure from and fully benefit from analytical insights during practice, the research aims to cultivate a mindful mode of thinking where one steps away from constant action and becomes more curious and observant in the process of music-making. The conclusion addresses the physical aspect of playing, applying the notion of mindfulness to one’s orientation to the instrument.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Nicholai Kapustin (1937-), a highly prolific Ukrainian composer whose output largely consists of piano music that amalgamates the Western musical tradition with jazz idioms, is becoming increasingly acclaimed in recent years. His works are known for the challenge they impose upon the player due to their density and complexity that are often accompanied by fast tempi, which raises the threshold of accessibility. In addition, due to the profuse jazz idioms, the physical approach that they entail requires extra consideration from the majority of the performers of his music, who are classically trained: Leslie De'Ath, who has performed much of Kapustin's music, comments that pianists playing Kapustin should employ a specific approach to arm weight, fingering, and hands that is distinct from the approach that is reinforced in the classical repertoire. Furthermore, Kapustin's music requires a particular treatment of the left hand: scholarship on jazz technique suggests that in jazz, left-hand melodic fragments have their own distinct role and must generate rhythms apart from the right, and that the beats need to be felt separately in each hand (Wildman 23).

Despite the number of such issues, Kapustin's pieces are yet quite natural and fitting for the hands because they are composed at the instrument and are therefore pianistically oriented (De’Ath). It also helps that Kapustin himself is such a skillful pianist who is clearly well versed in the natural physicality of playing. Therefore, as long as one seeks economy and efficiency by coordinating the movements and utilizing the weight of the arms, performing his works does not necessarily entail strain or fatigue. Rather, the more formidable challenge lies in discovering the conceptual binding that is required to capture the overarching sense of purpose of his music. According to De’Ath, it is easy to "get lost in the trees and not see the forest" in Kapustin’s
works, due to the complex texture. But at the same time, the ideas need to be communicated clearly, as his music prioritizes musical ideas over notes; even in the busiest of textures, he does not merely write notes without substance (De’Ath). Therefore, the main question that we ask is as follows: How can one internalize the musical ideas in his music in a way that they can shine through the thick texture, and retain one’s own attention as well as the interest of the audience?

One of the most helpful factors in playing Kapustin’s music is that it is based on classical structure (which is a point that will be demonstrated in detail in the subsequent chapters). According to Chaffin, Imreh and Crawford, the formal structure of classical music provides a “ready-made hierarchical organization,” which allows those who are familiar with it to proceed through the pieces without conscious effort (71). Although this information in itself is nothing new, when applied to music of Kapustin, it becomes quite useful; it encourages the performer to utilize the analytical skills that one already has based on the knowledge of the Western tradition and focus on sustaining a large perspective of the piece, which keeps one from being blinded by profuse idiomatic details. Therefore, although analytical skill is an asset in virtually any type of music, Kapustin’s music may benefit from it even more than in works by other composers.

In order to gain a better understanding of the underlying structure of Kapustin’s music, this research encourages not only practicing at the piano, but also a regular involvement in analysis and visualizing the music away from the instrument. Mental investigations of music are the most effective when in combination with physical practice (Barry and Hallam 154), which also affirms the need for performers to maintain the right balance of these activities. This process needs to begin early in the course of learning: the earlier formal issues are clarified, the more efficient the practice will be in the future because these findings can become the foundation of
other aspects of playing and can naturally become reinforced during the course of subsequent practice sessions. Furthermore, this practice can encourage one to develop a mindful mode of thinking where one steps away from constant action and objectively observes oneself and the process of music-making.

By regularly reinforcing both the muscular and conceptual understanding in such a manner, it becomes possible to “integrate hands with the head,” so that the mind does not “lag behind the fingers” (Chaffin, Imreh and Crawford viii). Utilizing different senses so that they reinforce one another (sometimes referred to as “multiple coding”) is crucial especially when learning a fast piece, where the mind must continuously grasp the events ahead of the motor memory (Chaffin, Imreh and Crawford 99). This is particularly true of the types of passages that contain many patterns that quickly change from one to the next, which make it difficult to combine these chunks into a unified conceptual and motor sequence (Chaffin, Imreh and Crawford 202). Kapustin’s writing is no exception to this, which again underpins the need for the performer to actively integrate conceptual and physical aspects in playing his works.

Practicing in this manner can promote the internalization of the musical structure and increase confidence, which can cultivate one’s natural desire to communicate the music. Also, it develops faith in one’s subconscious ability, providing the feeling of freedom needed to embody the joyful experience that Kapustin offers. According to Lilias MacKinnon, “consciousness is the center of practice, whereas subconsciousness is the center of performance” (vf). Needless to say, she does not imply that one should perform in an “automatic-pilot” or that one cannot rely on conscious endeavors during performance. However, it is also true that only a fraction of the mental activities in performance can be kept under conscious surveillance; therefore, addressing
various issues conscientiously in practice is needed in order to have the faith in the capacity of
out-of-awareness functions to proceed smoothly during performance (Reubart 58).

Before delving into the issues that are summarized above, Chapter 2 of the dissertation
investigates Kapustin’s biography, including his education, career, and factors that have
influenced his compositional style. In addition, the chapter points to some of the prominent
recordings and scholarship that has been done on the composer, provides a survey of his
compositional output, and summarizes some of the arguments and criticisms that surround his
works. This background chapter develops the necessary familiarity with the composer to be
prepared for the specific encounter with his music.

Chapter 3 examines the possible issues that can hinder one’s full enjoyment of Kapustin’s
music, especially those stemming from the lack of listening and engagement in the moment. The
chapter considers the role that attention plays in one’s perception of time, which leads to a
discussion of the psychological implications and benefits of analyzing music and the latter’s
ability to stimulate a natural flow of attention. The chapter concludes with an analysis of
Kapustin’s Eight Concert Etudes, Op. 40, emphasizing its classically-oriented structural features,
since the aim of the study is to connect to performers who have classical training. The analysis of
these etudes becomes the foundation of the discussion of performance issues that takes place in
the subsequent chapter.

Chapter 4 continues in the same trajectory as the discussion provided at the beginning of
Chapter 3, but with the additional aim of incorporating one’s analytical understanding of the
music into practice and communicating the ideas effectively in performance. The emphasis is
placed not necessarily on what one does, but on what takes place in one’s mind, for which one
needs to cultivate a mental stance called a “mindful state.” This point is brought to the fore, as being mindful of one’s learning process is a type of metacognitive skill that can be considered as one of the hallmarks of efficient practice. The chapter then explores some ways of conceptualizing and addressing specific issues in music through a discussion of Etudes Nos. 5-8 from Kapustin’s *Eight Concert Etudes*.

Lastly, Chapter 5 provides a more wholesome picture of the research by providing some implications of the investigations that were done in Chapters 3-4. It turns to issues regarding the physical aspect of playing, as this is essential to conceiving Kapustin’s music, particularly his etudes. This chapter couples the notion of mindfulness that was mentioned earlier with the goal of being in the moment, both physically and mentally.

Although my focus is on Kapustin’s *Eight Concert Etudes*, the general aim of the study is quite wide. This dissertation not only includes analytical observations, but addresses psychological issues that play a large role in practicing, as well as some performance issues with the goal of cultivating one’s attention and intellectual curiosity, thus looking at the issue from a pedagogical as well as from a performer’s point of view. Through this approach, the research aims to help bridge the gap between the composer and performers, thereby connecting his compositions to a larger audience.
Chapter 2: Kapustin’s Life, Works, and Approach

Introduction

Kapustin’s compositional output demonstrates that this composer has a profound understanding of the Western music tradition. He is known especially for his piano repertoire, which contains numerous works such as Sonatas, Preludes, Etudes, Variations, Sonatine, Suites, Preludes and Fugues, and Impromptus. While being deeply rooted in the Russian tradition, he manages to mix that style with jazz idioms. There are numerous other composers that incorporate jazz into their works, but no one else is known to have accomplished this in such an integrated way.

He incorporates not only the grand style of Rachmaninov, Medtner and Scriabin, but also a large palette of classical style from countless other influences. However, he does not include much from twentieth-century music; interestingly, he does not employ styles beyond that of Prokofiev or Scriabin. And in terms of the jazz vocabulary, Kapustin internalizes the stylistic evolution from Scott Joplin to Keith Jarrett, embracing everything starting from late nineteenth-century ragtime up to jazz of the last thirty years (Mann 11).

Kapustin has quickly begun to be internationally known in the last decade, but his music has not yet gained the popularity that it deserves. There are several reasons for this: one is the difficulty of publication in the Soviet Union, and the second reason is the composer's dislike for international travel and of self-promotion. Also, the high technical demands and conceptual challenges that one faces in his compositions may play a significant role in preventing some performers from approaching this music. However, it is worthwhile to explore his music: classically-trained pianists can utilize their own knowledge of the classical tradition to internalize
Kapustin's music, and treat his music not as an end in itself but as a gateway that can lead to a more profound understanding of the two genres that his music embodies. This will greatly enhance the growth of the performers and open their eyes to a much wider spectrum of music, which can become a great asset for any musician living in our age where an ability to communicate through multiple styles of music is valued and appreciated.

This chapter provides a brief summary of Kapustin's background, elements that influenced his style, studies that have been conducted on the composer, his compositional output, as well as arguments and criticisms that surround the issue of categorization of his compositional style.

Kapustin’s background

Kapustin is currently in his early seventies, living in Moscow with his wife, enjoying composing and recording. Born in 1937 in a small town called Gorlovka, Kapustin started to play the piano at the age of seven (Smith). Surprisingly, he did not have formal compositional training in his early years. He wrote his first piano sonata when he was thirteen, which he does not consider to be significant. He comments that these early compositions were more “academic” in style, rather than contemporary (Rijen).

The first teacher who significantly helped him was Avrelian Rubakh, a student of Felix Blumenfeld (1863-1930) who also taught Simon Barere and Horowitz. The four years that he spent with Rubakh became a critical period for his musical growth. One may also note that another student of Blumenfeld was Aleksandr Naumovich Tsfasman (1906-1971), who had remarkable similarities to Kapustin in terms of his career; he was trained as a classical pianist, but began playing in his own jazz orchestra in 1926 and was an extremely prolific composer.
Furthermore, we can see an interesting connection between these figures, as Blumenfeld, Horowitz, Tsfasman, and Kapustin are all Ukrainians (Rijen).

When Kapustin was eighteen, Rubakh introduced him to Alexander Goldenweiser, who was one of the most prominent pedagogues in the USSR and used to be a classmate of Sergey Rachmaninov and Alexander Scriabin (Mann 1). It is known that Goldenweiser studied with Ziloti, Pabst, Arensky, Ippolitov-Ivanov and Taneyev. He was also the teacher of Feinberg, Ginzburg, Nikolayevf and Kabalevsky (Smith). As one of the last pupils of Goldenweiser, Kapustin recounts that he did not gain much knowledge in a pianistic sense because of the old age of the teacher. However, this experience provided an aspiration for the young pianist, as it made him feel the strong link to the past (Rijen). In 1961, Kapustin graduated from the Moscow Conservatoire with a program that included Liszt B minor Sonata and Beethoven Op. 54 Sonata (Rijen). As evident from this, his education up to this point was quite traditional.

Kapustin began studying jazz at the age of sixteen after having heard it for the first time on the radio. While working diligently to be a virtuoso concert pianist, his interest in jazz gradually began to be cultivated. He comments that mixing of jazz and classical elements has been his interest since youth because he had never heard of such a mixture before and found it to be a novel idea (Rijen). Jazz started to take priority for him at the age of 20-22 (Rijen). He formed a quintet while he was a student, and played in a restaurant for wealthy foreigners. Soon after, the performance by his quintet was recorded by visitors from the U.S., and Voice of America broadcasted this recording on the radio (Rijen).

The first time he played his own composition in public was in 1957 at the International Festival of Youth, where he performed his Concertino for piano and orchestra, Op. 1. Furthermore, he also played in Yuri Saulsky’s Central Artist’s Club Big Band (Osborne). Then he
came to Oleg Lundstrom’s Jazz Orchestra with his First Concerto for piano and orchestra, Op. 2, which was specifically scored for this group. After graduation, he toured the Soviet Union for eleven years with Lundstrom's orchestra, during which time he mainly composed for big band, orchestra and piano. Following this tour, Kapustin worked as a composer/pianist in the orchestra “Goluboi Ekran” (Голубой экран) with director Boris Karamyshev (1972-77) (Saito 28). Then in 1977-84, he composed for National Cinema Symphony, after which he began working independently (Saito 32). Despite the harsh climate for the artists that worked under the censorship of Soviet authorities, Kapustin suffered surprisingly little: he was building his jazz skills not to remain in the field, but to enhance his compositional skills, and has consistently composed pieces with classical formalities. For this reason, and because his jazz career began only after the start of the Post-Stalin thaw, he was able to escape governmental meddling, at least in large part.

**Recordings and scholarship**

Kapustin is not only a composer, but is a phenomenal pianist as well, as we may observe through the various recordings that he has made. One of the most remarkable is the 1999 recording with cellist Alexander Zagorinsky, in which one can listen to Kapustin collaborating not only on his own compositions (Sonatas Nos. 1 and 2 for Cello and Piano), but also in works by Beethoven and Chopin.

There is a series of recordings that are referred to as “Kapustin Plays Kapustin.” Its first volume (released 2000) includes his *Eight Concert Etudes*, Op. 40, *Sonata-Fantasia, Suite in Old Style*, and *Variations*, Op. 41. Volume 2, which was also released in the same year, contains 24 Preludes and several other works. Other recordings in the series include *Kapustin Plays*
Kapustin: Piano Sonatas Nos. 2 & 3 (2001), and Kapustin Plays Kapustin: Piano Sonatas Nos. 4, 5, 6, Ten Bagatelles (2004). These were followed by the Kapustin: Last Recording (2004), which includes Piano Sonatas Nos. 7 and 12, and others; however, this turned out not to be the last recording, as Kapustin Returns, containing Piano Sonata No. 16 and other recent pieces, followed (2009). Furthermore, one must not forget the recording Piano Quintet / Nikolai Kapustin (2001), which contains four chamber music pieces. His recordings display an extremely high degree of virtuosity and brilliance. It is surprising that, despite such ability as a performer, he prefers composing and recording over performing in public.

Kapustin’s name was virtually unknown outside of Russia for a prolonged period of time, but now his compositions are spreading quickly. Below are some of the recordings, other than those of the composer, that facilitated this growth of fame. First of all, there is Nikolai Petrov’s recording 20th Century Piano Sonatas, which was recorded on 1992 and released on 2004 on Olympia CDs and includes Kapustin’s Second Piano Sonata. Nikolai Petrov Plays Encores on Olympia CDs, which was released in 1992, includes Kapustin’s Intermezzo, along with various other small pieces that span from J.S. Bach to Ginastera.

Marc-André Hamelin came to be a prominent figure in advocating Kapustin’s works, thanks to his inclination for performing pieces by jazz-infused composers. His 2001 recording *Kaleidoscope* is a comprehensive collection of piano miniatures that were mostly composed in the last century. For this recording, Hamelin, being a pianist-composer, has chosen lesser-known pieces that are also written by pianists. Note that this recording contains *Etude Pour la Main Gauche Seule*, Op. 36, by Felix Blumenfeld, who, as noted above, was the teacher of Kapustin’s piano teacher Avrelian Rubakh. Lastly, Hamelin released *In a State of Jazz* in 2008, which pays homage to twentieth century composers who considered jazz to be a vital part of their music.

In the interview that Hariett Smith conducted with Kapustin in 2000, it was mentioned that the collapse of the Soviet Union ended the publication of Russian music, and that Kapustin’s music ceased being published. However, the situation has improved since then: now his Soviet-era Melodiya recordings are being reissued on the Boheme label, and his scores, which were once difficult to obtain, began to be published in the early 2000s. German and Japanese companies are particularly keen on publishing his works. Consequently, his works are presently much more widespread, as can be witnessed in various competitions and international events.

There are numerous other notable pianists to be mentioned: Vadim Rudenko, Ludmil Angelov, Daniel Del Pino, Catherine Gordeladze, Shan-Shan Sun, John Salmon, Nobuyuki Tsujii, and Masahiro Kawakami, to name a handful.

Lastly, I turn to the scholarship on Kapustin. The first dissertation, “Reflections on Modernity of Kapustin” (2006) by Daisuke Saito, includes a detailed account of Kapustin’s life, people and community surrounding his works, and dissemination of his music in Japan, as well as a short analysis of his piano sonatas. Furthermore, there have been two dissertations in English dedicated to this composer. The first dissertation, "Red, White, and Blue Notes: The
Symbiotic Music of Nikolai Kapustin," written by Jonathan Mann in 2007, includes valuable information that the author obtained through interviews via email, which cannot be found in other sources. This work contains a discussion regarding the dual nature of Kapustin's compositions, terminology that is used to describe and categorize his style, and evidence that his music is more oriented towards the classical tradition than to jazz. It also introduces some of the jazz techniques used in his works. Furthermore, it traces the history of jazz in Soviet culture in tandem with the events in the life of the composer. Mann concludes with an analysis of Sonatina, Op. 100, Prelude No. 9 in E Major, Op. 53, and Fugue No. 1 in C major, Op. 82.

Secondly, "A Man of Two Worlds: Classical and Jazz Influences in Nikolai Kapustin's Twenty-Four Preludes, Op. 53" was written by Randall Creighton in 2009. The author places less emphasis on the composer's biographical information and categorization of his works than does Mann; however, utilizing his background in jazz theory, he offers a wide range of knowledge on standard and modern jazz techniques that are used in Kapustin's pieces, as well as classical techniques. As his title suggests, Creighton’s focus is on Twenty-Four Preludes, Op. 53.

**Compositional output**

One glimpse at his oeuvre reveals that Kapustin is an extremely prolific composer. His first published piece is *Concertino for piano and Orchestra*, Op. 1, which was composed in 1957. His compositions during the tours with Lundstrom’s Orchestra in 1961-1972 and in most of the 1970s have been mostly written for orchestra and big band. Many of these can be heard on the website that was created by the composer’s son (http://www.theory.caltech.edu/~kapustin/Nikolai/Nikolai_Kapustin_index.htm). This invaluable site includes some of Kapustin's chamber music, selected orchestral music from the 1960s and 1970s, along with several YouTube clips.
The most noteworthy of this collection is the early clip of the composer performing his Toccata Op. 8 with Lundstrom’s group in 1964.

The composer's focus on composition did not manifest itself early - he only reached Op. 30 by 1980. But after this point, he has become increasingly engrossed in composing and reached Op. 140 by 2009. It is quite notable that most of his output, which includes music for orchestra and big band, short pieces for piano, 20 piano sonatas, and concerti for various instruments, have been composed only over the last two decades (Whitehouse).

His first composition for solo piano was Day-Break, Op. 26 (1976). This was then followed by Suite in the Old Style, Op. 28 (1977), which is one of the earliest pieces available in the West. The Suite provides remarkable evidence that his music, despite its profuse jazz idioms, is carefully and traditionally planned and constructed; it mixes baroque dance forms with jazz idioms, which works quite well due to some similarities that these genres possess (Schmitz 75).

The amount of piano compositions in Kapustin's repertoire increased in the 1980s, and it has been his main interest ever since. Among the best-known pieces are his technically formidable Eight Concert Etudes, Op. 40 (1984), which follow the nineteenth-century tradition of the concert etude genre. One may consider this set to be on a par with the prominent works of the genre, including those by Liszt, Lyapunov, and Godowsky (Distler). It is interesting that Etude No. 8 was composed first (Saito and Wada), which attests to the meaningfulness of the last etude in relation to the other etudes, as we shall discover in Chapters 3b and 4b. Furthermore, Kapustin comments that these etudes are to be programmed as a complete set, as Etudes Nos. 4-5 and Nos. 7-8 are connected due to the attacca markings, and because the tonal relationships between the etudes are planned to provide a high degree of proportion and cohesion as a whole (Saito and Wada). The paragraph below gives a brief description of each etude.
Etude No. 1, "Prelude," begins with twelve-measure introduction, and contains flamboyant figurations that intertwine the melody and the accompaniment. The second etude, "Reverie," is reflective and gentle in character with its flowing double notes in the right hand, and is reminiscent of Rachmaninov's Prelude Op. 23 no. 9 (Distler). The third etude, "Toccata," lives up to its name with its propulsive, virtuosic figurations of repeated notes that swiftly shift from one register to another. The fourth etude, "Remembrance," has Chick Corea's extensive, discursive lines, and alternations between 3/4 and 4/4 with processional accompaniment (Distler). Its texture varies from time to time in the climactic moments of the piece, as the intricate right-hand figurations move over to the lower register, and left-hand chords ascend. The fifth etude, "Raillery," utilizes the classic 12-bar blues form layered with curious harmonizations and unpredictable accents. The sixth etude, "Pastoral," has a multi-strain format similar to Scott Joplin's rags and James Johnson's stride showpieces (Distler). It may be more animated than the title suggests (Whitehouse). The seventh etude, "Intermezzo," consisting exclusively of passagework in thirds in the right hand, is reminiscent of American musical theatre. The last one of the set, "Finale," with its explosive energy, is similar to etudes 1 and 3, but is more compact in form. Although the titles in his works are not provided by the composer himself but are usually added by either editors or friends (Saito and Wada), they reflect the general sentiment of the music to a great extent. Furthermore, speaking of etudes, one must not neglect the Five Etudes in Different Intervals, Op. 68, which features twentieth-century virtuoso piano techniques along with swing-infused rhythms and constantly shifting accents.

His 24 Preludes, Op. 53 (1988), which has been thoroughly discussed by Creighton, is an ambitious work that has come to be celebrated as one of the most significant of the genre in the modern piano repertoire. These pieces contain a large spectrum of jazz techniques such as blues,
swing, stride and funk (Whitehouse). They follow Chopin's key sequence, which has been inherited in the preludes of various Russian composers, such as Shostakovich (Whitehouse).

Kapustin started writing piano sonatas relatively late in his career - his Sonata No. 1, Op. 39, was written only in 1989. He has written twenty sonatas so far (the last one was Sonata No. 20, Op. 144, which was published in 2011). Each sonata consists of three to four movements and is between 15-25 minutes in length. The movements are either clearly separated, or in other cases (such as in Sonatas 1 and 15, in which Kapustin uses "quasi-fantasia" indication in order to create an improvisatory feel between the movements), the movements merge together seamlessly. The sonatas contain diverse stylistic elements, such as walking bass, swing and boogie-woogie, from which one may hear the influence of various jazz musicians. Furthermore, one may note that the sonatas contain no fewer technical challenges than do his etudes. Kapustin's etudes may be more exclusively focused on certain technical features, but the overall range of technical difficulty in the sonatas does not greatly differ from that of the etudes.

As mentioned at the outset of the chapter, his compositions are unlike many others, such as some works by Shostakovich and Ravel, that have utilized jazz idioms. Kapustin’s immersion in the jazz field sets him apart from them, as his works manifest the jazz world more than ever before in the classical structure. In fact, the way in which he manipulates and transforms the melodic and rhythmic essence of the motif or melody within a given piece is quite akin to the performance style of many prominent jazz masters (Whitehouse).

In terms of the specific influences in his music, Kapustin undoubtedly considers Oscar Peterson to be his utmost influence (Smith). Peterson’s style of playing owes significantly to Art Tatum, especially in terms of brilliant techniques and passagework, along with the left hand that plays an active, contrapuntal role (Mann 14). Critics have often commented on the resemblance
of Kapustin's music to that of Tatum, as Tatum was known for his exhilarating fast-tempo standards that relentlessly work the hands together and independently, creating “enough subplots for a Russian novel” (Whiteman 11). Also, it has been noted that influences of Erroll Garner and Chick Corea can be heard. Therefore, in performing Kapustin's music, one may not neglect that there is an underlying feel to some passages that simply cannot be notated. In order to execute these passages convincingly, it requires one to be familiar with the styles of these prominent jazz artists (De'Ath).

**Jazz vs. classical**

A large amount of discussion in the currently existing scholarship on Kapustin is dedicated to the hybrid nature of his works and to the difficulty of placing his output within the appropriate musicological context. This is a complicated discussion, especially since the boundaries between classical and jazz genres have become less pronounced over the years; as Mann suggests, both genres have “reached and passed their entropic climaxes” throughout the course of the history (4). Both genres embrace the range of music that is too far to be bundled into neat piles; what is generally called classical music includes the vast range of music from Renaissance to the avant-garde, while jazz embraces the spectrum starting all the way from its birth right up to present.

One of the elements that contributes to the confusion involving stylistic discussion of Kapustin’s music is the varied use of terminology, of which the most prominent are "Third Stream," "fusion," and "cross over." The term "Third Stream" was coined by Gunther Schuller in 1957. According to an entry in *Grove Music Online*, it is a style that synthesizes the essential characteristics of contemporary Western art music with other musical traditions through
improvisation, written composition, or both (Schuller). Such confrontation is expected to enhance one another and promote new development. This definition is quite general and seems to be inclusive of many kinds of music. However, another entry in the same dictionary suggests that Third Stream music places emphasis on an element of improvisation, thus differentiating it from earlier attempts at symphonic jazz by such composers as Stravinsky, Milhaud, and others, who simply composed art music with a flavor of jazz (Latham, ed). According to the second definition, in which the emphasis is placed on the aspect of improvisation, this term would no longer apply to Kapustin’s music.

The term “fusion” is another popular choice of classification in defining Kapustin’s music. Mann reminds us that, while this term has a meaning as a noun that indicates a general process or result of joining two or more things together, it has a unique connotation in the jazz field. In jazz, this term is used as an adjective that refers to the movement that fuses jazz with rock. This movement was initiated by those such as Gary Burton, Miles Davis and Chick Corea in the late 1960s and 70s. While this word, with its indication of the amalgamation of styles, suits Kapustin’s works, its connotation of jazz and rock mixture can be misleading.

Lastly, the term “crossing over” refers to the act in which musician in one genre performs or composes in another (Mann 19). It carries a negative connotation, often representing occasions where the quality of both genres is weakened as a result, or as a quick money-making scheme. The rendition of Mozart piano concerti by Keith Jarrett, which invited numerous negative reviews, can be seen as an example of this (Mann 21). Such implication of the watering-down of the distinctive qualities of genres does not fairly serve the purpose of describing Kapustin's compositions, at least in terms of their preservation of the classical traditions; in fact,
one could argue that such highly-organized classical structures are sometimes even strengthened in the unique context where genres are mixed.

Despite the confusion of terminology, we can nevertheless gain an understanding of Kapustin’s style by observing how the composer views himself. In several of the interviews that have been conducted, Kapustin clearly states that he does not see himself as a jazz specialist, and does not wish to be pigeonholed as such (van Rijen 2004). He is not interested in jazz forms or in improvisation at all, despite the fact that he has led a double life as a jazz and classical pianist; while jazz is only "color" for him, classical forms have much larger significance (van Rijen 2000). In fact, he claims to have always seen himself as a "classical composer," even during the years where he spent the majority of his time with big bands and jazz orchestras (Whitehouse).

The stylistic mixture in Kapustin's music as discussed above has in fact invited several negative reactions. For instance, one reviewer commented that Kapustin “attempts to write music that effects a genuine fusion between jazz and classical idioms almost invariably sound contrived and unconvincing” (Mann 20). Furthermore, one may add that, not only the critics, but the general attitude among the classically trained musicians, can be an issue. Kapustin stated: “Maybe the government looked at jazz with some suspicions, but it seemed to me that an attitude to jazz of some professors of conservatories is much worse” (Mann 23). This indicates that the classical world contains in itself a sense of elitism, and also an ignorance of what is involved in jazz. Kapustin admits that Alexander Goldenweiser, his teacher at the Moscow Conservatory, was likely not aware that Kapustin was absorbed in jazz in the evenings, and possibly was not even sure what jazz was (Mann 23).

The reactions of jazz musicians to Kapustin's music were not entirely positive either because his pieces do not fit into their norms, especially due to the lack of improvisation. This is
not a surprise, since the incorporation of jazz idioms in his music automatically sets up an expectation for those who are familiar with the jazz style. To explain this reaction, it may be helpful to refer to Philip Alperson, who addresses an argument regarding the definition of jazz and how some jazz musicians view themselves. He points out that some of them view the ability to play jazz with an attitude that resembles religiosity (48). Such pride in the culture of jazz can make them protective of their field, and thus dismiss artists like Kapustin, who is not entirely immersed in their traditions, as simply not jazz at all.

However, we may be tempted to ask ourselves the most fundamental question: what exactly is "jazz" then? Although raising this question is necessary and inevitable for the study of Kapustin, it opens a conceptual can of worms, as one becomes faced with various terminology and concepts that are quite challenging to put into words or classify (Alperson 39). Therefore, rather than pointing out each possible element that contributes to the concept of jazz, let us take one aspect that is extensively argued in nearly all of the discussions regarding jazz: the element of improvisation.

First of all, one may note that improvisation allows music to quickly absorb various influences, and thus permit more flexibility. This is because the composer's authority, which exists in the non-improvisational realm, is shifted over to the performer. The performer is thereby required to have internalized the style thoroughly enough to be able to maneuver the materials in a timely manner. For instance, a jazz musician may hear an unfamiliar tune on the street, and then express what they heard right away in a performance the same night, using their own interpretations. This is because, as Whitehead describes it, jazz is "voracious and ingests all kinds of nourishment" (Whitehead 2). For this reason, jazz seems to have a feeling of being more closely integrated to the processes of everyday life, as it is much quicker to absorb and reflect
various influences without carefully sifting through them. Such an aesthetic reflects the emphasis that is placed on the process rather than the result, and this explains why listeners can tune into jazz and enjoy observing the processes in which musical ideas take their shape.

It is known that traditional jazz musicians do not improvise from scratch in each session. If they find certain ideas to be too valuable to discard, they can keep them in mind and reuse them for various occasions. This process of elimination is basically what Kapustin does while composing - he combines the best materials. While this may improve the artistic quality of the given piece for himself and some others, such value judgment may seem relative to some, because this strategy sacrifices the opportunity for the listeners to witness the process of improvisation, which may sound less perfect but nevertheless exposes the experimentations of performers in formulating their musical ideas.

However, lack of improvisation may not necessarily be considered simply as a shortcoming; one may view this quality about Kapustin as an interesting addition that enhances the experience of listening. His music is unique in the way that it is possible for the listener to be deceived by the impression it gives. On the one hand, the composer's mastery in the jazz field allows the piece to sound as if the performer is improvising; the relationship between the composer, who brings the spontaneous feel of the music to the foreground, and the performer who captures this feeling and reflects the process of music-making rather than merely the result, is quite notable. However, there are also occasions in which his music simply cannot escape giving an impression of premeditation because it is too complex in its structure to be improvised, thus revealing that the composer prioritizes structural considerations over spontaneity (Rijen). This ongoing interplay between the improvisatory feel and the premeditated impression can be considered as one of the features that makes his music particularly intriguing.
Furthermore, in defense of the composer's standpoint from those who attack his music for its abandonment of jazz aesthetics, one may argue that his stylistic mixture is not entirely against the spirit of jazz because the jazz genre itself is quite vast and flexible. Jazz is not as much about the materials musicians play, but is about what players do with them, which indicates that the process of variation is particularly crucial; in jazz, one can exploit the possibilities of variation techniques, utilizing artful distortions of rhythms, melody and even form (Whitehead 5). Considering this, what Kapustin does in his compositions is to not flat out "deny" the tradition of jazz, but to vary the form and extend the tradition to such a degree that he steps out of its genre-defining boundaries.

In addition, one must recall that jazz is a style that deeply embraces paradoxes, incorporating seemingly antithetical elements (Whitehead 7). Of course, this is a quality that belongs not solely to jazz, but is shared with the classical genre or any other types of music in varying degrees, as opposites are known to reinforce one another and allow music to captivate the listeners more effectively; however, this trait is in fact more pronounced in jazz. Kapustin's style of writing may seem to be outside of the jazz boundary, but its incorporation of antithetical elements and the way it defies the form of jazz is, ironically, not entirely unsuitable for the genre.
Chapter 3a: Achieving Mindfulness Through Analysis

Introduction

As mentioned in Chapter 2, some of the prominent challenges that Kapustin’s music poses are its fast tempi, complexity, and thick textures, which can make the performer feel inundated with notes and lose the larger sense of musical purpose. In order to address this issue, we shall explore how to achieve centeredness and mindfulness by shifting from the effortful mindset that revolves around constant action to the listening mode that is observant and calm. With this objective in mind, the chapter will first address the issue regarding why one is often prone to lose connection with the present moment. It will then discuss the role of attention in one’s perspective of time, which will lead to a discussion regarding some of the mental implications of analyzing music. Lastly, the chapter will provide an analysis of Kapustin’s Eight Concert Etudes, Op. 40, which will become the foundation of the discussion in the next chapter of selected compositional features and performance issues in these pieces.

Lack of engagement with the moment

Although the mechanical approach towards music that stems from one’s lack of engagement with the moment can be more frequently noticeable in fast pieces that contain ongoing streams of notes, it is in fact a common tendency everywhere. It has been noted that inattention, or the lack of mindfulness, is widespread in the music field and elsewhere; many people are “not there” to notice much of what is going on around them (Langer, Artist 12). We shall first investigate the background of this phenomenon, as there are various reasonable
biological causes for it. Becoming aware of these factors can help one to cultivate a more understanding outlook on oneself, which is a first step towards improvement.

First of all, human beings are prone to carry a multitude of situations that demand completion, which hinders one from paying attention to the task at hand. This is because the brain is hard-wired to look ahead and constantly plan for the future. In addition, the brain not only recognizes threats, but imagines them. It is because of this tendency that the mind can begin to wander and turn to troubling issues even when things seem to be going well. While this feature of the brain is meant to be a survival mechanism, it can cause various negative consequences (Klein, *Happiness* 186). As the constant leapfrogging into the future wastes mental and emotional energy, it inevitably entails a huge loss (Bays 5).

This is further aggravated by our inherent tendency for negative feelings to override the positive. Human neurological systems are generally more inclined to unhappy experiences and feelings than that of enjoyment, which is also a type of defensive survival mechanism (Klein, *Happiness* 28). Furthermore, when one focuses on pain, the changes in the cerebral cortex cause one to become more sensitive to the sensation of suffering, thereby leaving their marks in the brain and laying the path for the future (Klein, *Happiness* 58-59). In short, the perception of negative feelings is, at least partially, learned and reinforced (Klein, *Happiness* 66).

Another issue that creates challenge for one to be engaged in the moment is the constant hurry that has become a social phenomenon, especially in recent years. Stefan Klein, a physicist specializing in social implications of time, points out that having a full schedule became a norm and a status symbol in developed countries, in which case one may subconsciously feel justified to be in a hurry (Klein, *Time* 226). According to Klein, we feel hurried because we are not
willing to relinquish anything or walk away from one thing to savor another. Furthermore, the ongoing haste is not only internally created, but is driven by society. “After all, our society thrives on creating needs - not reducing them,” says Klein (Time 227). He further comments that constant rush and the overflow of stimulation creates a drug-like effect from which it becomes difficult to detach oneself (Time 170). Returning to the subject of music, it is easy to imagine that, unless one learns to detach oneself from such a mindset and tune into the given moment, it would be difficult for one to listen deeply and perform purposefully. This is particularly pertinent in Kapustin’s music, where its virtuosic character and the extremity of tempo can cause the player to blindly pass by its artful compositional features, creating a false impression that all that this music represents is a quick dose of bravura and stimulation.

However, fortunately, one is not hopeless over the flow of time, as there are ways to deal with these issues. The perception of time is extremely subjective, due to the fact that the human mind fundamentally lacks a singular sensor that can accurately measure time. The only “clock” within a human body is the biological clock that determines the perception of day and night, which bears almost no relation to the actual experience of time. Instead, the brain is reliant on the combination of various mechanisms, which causes the sense of time to be dependent on multiple factors (Klein, Time 38). For example, physical factors play a large role in varying the sense of time in performance. According to research by neurologist F. Binkofski, pianists who were asked to breathe faster during performance took a faster tempo without being aware that their new tempo was any different from the previous one (Klein, Time 62). Furthermore, scholars have come to a consensus that, out of the numerous factors that influence the perception of time, attention plays the largest role. They have discovered that the more information there is to which
one is attentive, the longer time seems (Klein, *Time* 126). Therefore, depending on how the performer pays attention (and consequently, depending on how one comprehends the piece), the same music can either vary in its impression from feeling very fast to not fast at all. This indicates that, by systematically training oneself to pay attention in playing, one can develop a new relationship with time and learn to recognize the attentive state of mind as pleasure instead of succumbing to the state of hurry (Klein, *Time* xix).

The ramifications of this pursuit are quite notable. By focusing one’s attention in the moment, it is possible to fundamentally alter one’s mindset regarding the surrounding circumstances so that excessive concerns about the past or future naturally dissipate. This phenomenon has been extensively studied in recent years by those such as by Daniel Gilbert, who elucidates how one’s impressions and feelings that compose the present moment become the materials with which one builds the image of past and future (169). For this reason, even one’s memory of the past, which seemingly lies intact in the brain, is in fact constantly being reshaped according to the impressions from the current moment (Klein, *Time* 120). Applying this in music, a performer, when a certain passage is going well, may be inclined to think that other passages earlier in the piece were also successful by subconsciously reinterpreting the events of the past. The extent to which one’s impression of the present moment influences one’s outlook of the surrounding events is far beyond what one would expect, and therefore cannot be over-emphasized.
Attention and analysis

We have learned the importance of getting a grip on the flow of time, and that this process is largely controlled by attention. In that case, how can one apply this knowledge and learn to pay attention in making music? Before discussing this, one must clarify the meaning of the word “attention.” Despite the common understanding of this expression, to pay attention does not take place in the same manner as when photographers bring an object into focus and hold the camera still - this is not only difficult, but is an unnatural way to concentrate (Langer, *Learning* 38). Also, paying attention does not take place from simply making oneself to do so, as one can see from the fact that attention level can subside despite one’s efforts to concentrate. Instead, what attention entails is a “soft vigilance,” in which the mind is open to take in information (Langer, *Learning* 44).

For this, the music first of all needs to become captivating for the performer. If its expressive content is fully appreciated (which can be done largely through understanding of structure and its meanings), it can grab attention from other issues that compete for attention. This is because our brain makes a selection based on the level of meaningfulness and distinctiveness (Reubart 48). When one’s understanding of the music is captivating enough to create the sense of purpose, the brain naturally increases focus and induces one to have the desire to communicate what music has to offer.

Therefore, one needs to create fresh perspectives in the piece that can naturally attract attention, which is particularly important since practice always entails repetitions - as Langer comments, repetition in any profession has the danger of leading to mindlessness (Langer, *Mindful* 21). The brain seeks novelty that acts as a nourishment for grey cells: When gray cells
are insufficiently engaged, or when one is repeating without due attention, one becomes
mindless, and unpleasant thoughts and fears often intrude (Klein, *Happiness* 222).

The best method in providing the nourishment for the brain is to perceive the music
differently than usual by either varying the stimulus, or varying one’s perspective in relation to it,
which enhances the joy of discovery (Langer, *Learning* 42). This helps with psychological issues
of playing to a large extent, since those who manage to turn the attention outward have little
room left for worry or fear (Klein, *Happiness* 216). However, experiencing novelty in something
familiar is an act that requires practice. Many are accustomed to taking in as little as possible,
since this is how the brain protects one from stimuli that do not play a significant role in our
survival (Klein, *Happiness* 172). This is where investigating the piece analytically and improving
one’s conceptual understanding becomes helpful. When engaged in analytical thinking, one is
training oneself to listen to selected issues within the music, which filters the information. This
helps one to avoid becoming indifferent or unreceptive towards music by preventing one from
being flooded by excessive unorganized information.

Analysis can accomplish this for several reasons. First, analyzing, as a type of mental
practice, frees the player from constantly being bound to what one is physically playing at the
given moment. It is not without basis that practicing away from the instrument is encouraged by
countless pianists from Karl Leimer and Walter Gieseking to Rudolf Firkusny and Leon Fleisher.
According to Gerle, while muscles need to be trained for the physical execution of the piece, the
mind needs to be exercised while one is not physically playing (22). This makes sense
physiologically as well: In order for the brain to use the imagination freely, the visual/auditory
cortex cannot be preoccupied with the issues at hand; that is why when a person tries to remember a tune, they often plug the ear, blocking out current auditory sensations (Gilbert 181).

Secondly, analysis helps one to grasp the larger perspective of the piece, which makes it easier to become involved in what is happening in the present moment while playing. This indicates that being “engaged in the present” does not simply imply that the performer is preoccupied solely with the notes that are played at the very moment, but is aware of where one is located in relation to the piece as a whole. Clear understanding of the musical structure can be compared to a mindful state of being, which resembles living in a transparent house where everything can be perceived and is available (Langer, Mindful 201). In this case, a musical structure is perceived as a space of dwelling rather than something simply to get through, which provides options to explore the moment and fully enjoy what is within it. Such sense of psychological space that one creates within the music can be extremely helpful, especially in the type of pieces that Kapustin writes.

What this does, in sum, is to fortify the relationship between the “whole” and the “part.” As is well known, learning is facilitated by using the whole-part-whole approach, namely to grasp the larger sense of the piece, delve into details, and then return to the perspective of the whole. This is a process in which one must engage repeatedly in order to internalize the piece effectively. As described below, analysis provides the conceptual means to do this. The whole and part can thereby reinforce one another through the process of learning, thus enhancing the natural flow of attention.

Another way analysis contributes to improved attention is through its influence on memory. One can internalize the music better when conceptual memory is used in tandem with,
and as a foundation to, all of the other types of memory (Williamon 118). Although interviews indicate that pianists do not necessarily consciously think about conceptual memory, this does not imply that it is not being used: for instance, many of them stress the effect of mental practicing, and when one is engaged in mental practice, conceptual memory is inevitably involved in the process (Chaffin, Imreh, and Crawford 51). In fact, whether performers refer to it as analysis or not, it has been discovered that most professional musicians adopt some type of conscious analytical strategy that can aid in developing an understanding of the musical structure, especially in larger, complex works (Williamon 118). The process of memorization based on analysis can be a great help in shaping one’s attention during the learning process, as will be explored in the next chapter.

Lastly, musical understanding through analysis exerts influence on physical aspects of playing. When one internalizes the musical structure to an extent that it feels natural, and when one is convinced about what to communicate, it provides purpose to the activity, which makes it easier to be physically engaged, enabling one to address physical difficulties in such a way that one is not dwelling solely on them. As Westney states, conflicts and unrealistic thinking causes physical difficulties (225). And such conflicts often result from musical ideas that are not fully internalized.

The value of analysis as a process

One must keep in mind that it is not only the end result that matters; the very process of analyzing has value as an end in itself (Rogers 13). This is important because the most satisfying musical experiences are often created by one’s inherent desire to learn and discover. Practice
does not need to be founded upon “delayed gratification,” which implies that the working process is necessarily arduous and that one has to wait until later to reap the pleasure (Langer, Learning 52). In fact, partial victories can warrant more attention and yield more positive feelings than the end result (Klein, Happiness 225). Because analyzing creates these partial victories and encourages one to enjoy the process of discovering rather than focusing only on the end result, it can provide ongoing motivation.

Such pleasure can be explained by the sense of well-being and elation that is created when one is alertly observing, even when not physically involved. This is due to the anticipation of conquest that arises in the expectation system (Klein, Happiness 257). New stimuli are particularly influential in activating this expectation system. Klein explains that such inner condition of desire makes one want to give almost anything to obtain it (Happiness 121). And because this condition produces dopamine, it is stimulating for the mind (Klein, Happiness 121). Dopamine works like a mental lubricant with which the brain efficiently processes data, allowing one to react and think faster (Klein, Happiness 224). Also, dopamine generates the feeling of joy and craving for self-transcendence, which is the root of creativity and artistic motivation (Reubart 55).

Experiencing the feelings as described above on a regular basis has remarkable positive impact on the brain. Neurobiologists have recently begun to recognize the extreme plasticity of the brain, and how one can enhance the capacity for happiness. This is because, in the same way that one is born with a capacity for speech, one has the capacity for positive feelings (Klein, Happiness xv). Moreover, this system can be trained like muscles, thus compensating for the inherent tendency to be attuned to negative feelings. Although one cannot directly change the
emotions and simply decide to be happy, it is nevertheless possible to control the nervous system indirectly by changing the environment or thoughts (Klein, *Happiness* 14).

Interestingly, these findings in modern brain research corroborate the style of thinking that is central to ancient Greek philosophy, which relates happiness to right action rather than perceiving it as an element that comes from outside (Klein, *Happiness* 29). As a summary of the factors that we have discussed so far in this chapter, one can say that, while unhappiness tends to emerge on its own, one has to “work” to gain happiness. In other words, engagement in the moment and the feeling of pleasure are usually not generated independently without a cause; rather, they are results of a given action (Klein, *Time* 97).

**Conclusion**

Reconciling with time and re-circuiting the brain to take happiness from the moment is possible and can readily be applied within the act of music-making by improving one’s attention through the process of analysis. With these factors in mind, we shall now proceed to the analysis of Kapustin’s *Eight Concert Etudes*, Op. 40. This analysis will provide a survey of all of the etudes and their primary structural features, serving as a fundamental point from which applications to performance issues can branch out in Chapter 4.
Chapter 3b: Analysis of Kapustin’s *Eight Concert Etudes*

**Etude No. 1, “Prelude”**

Based on two contrasting themes, the *Prelude* presents a clear formal scheme unlike some of the other etudes in the set. It consists of the sections ABA, followed by a brief development, after which the materials B and A return, thus constituting a ABACBA form (see Figure 1.1). Since the characteristics of the themes and their developmental processes are lucid, the challenge in performing the piece lies not in differentiating its components, but in expressing how each section creates the need for another and in creating overall continuity. One therefore needs to discern the piece’s unifying features and grasp the musical direction, namely through understanding the movement of the bass.

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<tr>
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<table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A section (coda):</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>mm. 63-70</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
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Figure 1.1: Kapustin, Etude No. 1, form
Throughout the A section, the explosive A theme creates the driving impulse with the impassioned energy that prevails in Kapustin’s writing. This theme (shown in Example 1.1) is the most recognizable feature in the piece, but despite its determined and straightforward character, it presents itself at first in a manner that the key center is unclear; the first four measures of the piece constitute the Bb seventh chord, as if plunging into it unexpectedly or in the middle of an action, and there is no sign of the key of C until the start of section B. Since this is the only etude in the set that begins in such an ambiguous manner, this beginning seems designed to play a dramatic role, setting up the impetuous, unbridled force that these etudes embody as a set.

Example 1.1: Kapustin, Etude No. 1, A theme (mm. 1-2)

As mentioned earlier, the bass line merits special attention; by perceiving the music horizontally and tuning into the larger stepwise motions of the bass, one can keep oneself from getting caught up in the numerous leaps. This becomes especially necessary due to the construction of the theme (see Example 1.2). The A theme consists of sequences of two-measure groups, out of which units 1 and 2 (mm. 1-2 and 3-4) begin the same way, and so do units 3 and 4 (mm. 5-6 and 7-8). Therefore, in order to communicate the sense of continuity without falling
into rhythmic monotony, one needs to be aware of the harmonic movements and the sense of purpose that they create.

The bass line outlines a stepwise descent throughout the A section. The unexpected harmony at the start of the piece sounds above Ab, which then progresses downward to G and F#, landing on F at the beginning of the bridge (m. 9). Although it is an octave higher, the bridge continues the same bass line movement that began at the A theme, progressing in a stepwise movement - F, Eb, Db, then to C, which is at the start of B section, at m. 13. This process exerts a gravitational pull in the bass from Ab down to C (refer to Example 1.2). The continuity of the bass is supported by a seamless musical texture throughout the entire section, as often happens in Kapustin’s music, with the small rests in one hand often being occupied by notes in the other hand. This continues up to the end of the bridge section (m. 12), where the composer makes effective use of the quarter rest, indicating this location’s significance as a point of arrival.
Example 1.2: Kapustin, Etude No. 1, A section (mm. 1-12)

While retaining some of the features from the beginning section (such as the ascending sixteenth figure in the right hand, and the two-measure phrase units that consist of ascending and descending motions), the B theme presents a character that is contrasting in many ways (shown in Example 1.3). For instance, the sense of inevitability that was communicated in the first theme due to the continuous stepwise descent comes to a halt at the beginning of the section, due to the repetition of the bass C Bb Ab, which takes place for the first time in the piece. Here, the bass plays with the idea of the familiar descending stepwise motion, but without committing to it. Also, in comparison to theme A, in which the highest note in the melody is placed at the beginning of the second measure, theme B reaches the top immediately and descends from it;
therefore, it begins in a similar manner as A but then changes. The rhythmic component plays a large role as well. In theme A, the first measure pushes forward with the accents, while the second measure, with the peak of the phrase placed on the downbeat, “stabilizes” the phrase. This pattern is maintained throughout mm. 1-8. In comparison, the phrase patterns of theme B do not possess such a relationship and lack such a sense of determination. In addition, the writing differs texturally; while the A section uses the left hand as an accompaniment that provides a stable metric foundation, the B section contains intertwining of the lines between the hands.

Example 1.3: Kapustin, Etude No. 1, B theme (mm. 13-14)

After several two-measure units throughout mm. 13-20, the music progresses into the "closing figures" (the right hand of mm. 21-23), which consist of a descending triad figure (Example 1.4). This figure was originally used as a conclusive part of the A theme in second inversion (Eb Cb Gb in the melody at m. 4), and also was hinted at the beginning of the B theme (B G E at m. 13, G Eb C at mm. 13-14) with a displaced metric placement (Example 1.5). Although the connection between these passages may seem tenuous due to the difference in their inversion and pitches, each of these occasions plays a common role: it always functions to bring closure after the ascending sixteenth figures within the given phrase. The descending figure at m. 22 (F D Bb), in comparison to the version seen in mm. 13-14, has heavier metric emphasis and
thus plays a more conclusive role, showing its connection to m. 2 and thus linking sections A and B together.

Example 1.4: Kapustin, Etude No. 1, “closing figure” (m. 22)

Example 1.5: Kapustin, Etude No. 1, descending triad figure in Theme B (m.13)

Along with these figures, the bass descent continues through the B section, although it is not as evident as before. The overall bass line in the B section can be summarized as follows: C (m. 13), Bb (m. 13), Ab (m. 14), G (m. 17), F (m. 18), G (m. 19), F# (m. 19), E (m. 20), Eb (m. 21), Db (m. 22), C (m. 23), B (m. 24), A (m. 25), then to G (m. 28). The final note G serves as the dominant that leads to the reiteration of the B theme at m. 29, in which the bass line descent of C Bb Ab G leads to the return of the A theme at mm. 35-40 in the home key, with G in the bass. The descending motion of the bass at mm. 35-40 continues towards the note C, which marks the tonic harmony at the beginning of the C section (m. 41, shown in Example 1.6).
Example 1.6: Kapustin, Etude No. 1, beginning of the C section (mm. 41-43)

The beginning of the C section bears some resemblance to the start of the B section due to the similarity in the starting chord and the character that is more withheld than that of the A theme. The bass line also behaves in a similar manner at first, progressing through C, Bb, Ab, and G as expected from the previous section, but then digresses. Because the listener, by this point, is likely accustomed to the stepwise descending bass lines, this digression from the expectation makes this section stand apart from the rest. Furthermore, because sections A and B had a pronounced sense of regularity due to their frequent use of two-measure groupings consisting of repeated figures that are enveloped in precise eight-measure sections, the spontaneity of the phrasing of the C section (although still organized in eight-measure groups) creates a fresh impact. The rhythmic structure of mm. 41-48 is more improvisatory and less determined, the interrelationship of the two hands is complex, and the harmonic gestures begin to consist of leaps from one idea to another, particularly before m. 49. At m. 49, the sense of direction is reacquired and is accompanied by the left hand that has changed its role to provide a stable rhythmic pulse as it did in the A theme. The drive continues to the end of the section, where the right-hand ostinato figures splash to the upper end of the keyboard while the left hand extends to the opposite end of the instrument, encompassing a range that is the largest thus far.

This tremendous buildup of expectation and drama through the C section is followed by a transformed version of the B theme (m. 57): it is combined with the explosive energy of the A
section, as if the accumulation of tension in the C section influenced the very character of the B
theme (Example 1.7). The dialogue-like quality of the B theme works logically here because
instead of “eluding” the question, as seen in mm. 13-14, the questioning segment of the phrase
(mm. 61-62) is repeated as if pressing for a response, which is finally answered with the C major
representation of the A theme at m. 63. This time, the momentum never comes to a halt and
heads straight to the ending, which gushes to the upper and lower extremes of the keyboard,
encompassing an even larger range than at the end of the C section.

Example 1.7: Kapustin, Etude No. 1, reappearance of the B theme (mm. 57-58)

The sense of continuity is created through various means: through the seamless texture
and with motivic connections between the sections. Furthermore, this quality is governed by the
sense of forward drive that is created through the gradual bass descent. By knowing the unifying
features of the piece and how various motives are used differently for different purposes, one can
gain a deeper understanding as to how the contrasts are created. This analytical process reveals a
well-planned musical structure and the sense of inevitability that unites the whole, as though the
piece takes place in a single gesture.
Etude No. 2, “Reverie”

Reflecting the title “Reverie,” Etude No. 2 is dreamy and flowing, brimming with glimmers of subtle colors. Having an ABA form (see Figure 2.1), the piece possesses a contrasting middle section that is seemingly unrelated to the surrounding materials, but upon a closer look, the connection between these materials becomes evident. For instance, the fluttering right-hand figures in the lyrical section return in the middle section, but their use differs from one occasion to another, playing a different dramatic role each time. In this way, the contrasting materials relate to one another in such an interactive manner that they naturally create the need for one another.

### A: mm. 1-22

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<td>mm. 17-22</td>
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<td>(6)</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>mm. 27-34</td>
<td>mm. 39-42</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(8)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>mm. 75-78</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(4)</td>
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The etude begins gently with a chromatic top line with sinuous neighboring notes in the right hand (shown in Example 2.1). The colorful right-hand fluttering is supported by the stability in the other hand that communicates the feeling of ease and simplicity, often using bass movements of rising fourths (or falling fifths) - B♭ E♭ A♭ (mm. 1-3), D♭ G C F B♭ E♭ A♭ (mm. 6-11), D♭ G♭ C♭ F♭ (mm. 14-15), F B♭ E♭ (mm. 16-17) - which are contrasted by other movements (e.g., parallel motions at m. 5 and m. 13). This is one of the exclusive features of the lyrical section; in the contrasting middle section, the circle of fifths progression is found merely in one location, at mm. 51-58.

Example 2.1: Kapustin, Etude No. 2, beginning of the A section (mm. 1-2)
The A section has two large phrases, of which the second phrase begins in a similar manner as the first, but with the dominant in the bass instead of the tentative ii7. The left hand contains some added sixteenth figures that make it seem as though the piece is gradually becoming more animated, possibly hinting at some of the upcoming events in the middle section (one may also note that the addition of the sixteenth figures mirrors the ways in which the rhythms of the two hands relate to one another in the B section). After a small deviation to Cb major at m. 14, Ab major is restored, leading to the cadential dominant harmony at m. 18, then to tonic. The right-hand pattern in m. 21 creates a hemiola, reflecting the instability of the transitioning process. But this is not entirely new because the left-hand figures in various locations earlier in the piece had a hint of this effect (at the first half of m. 16 and the second half of m. 18).

The middle section begins at m. 23, which is organically connected due to its tempo relationship (dotted quarter=dotted half note) that makes the new eighth notes the same speed as the former sixteenths. The angular writing of the B section creates a sharp contrast to the previous material, exploiting the interval of fourths. In the four-bar introduction with which the section begins (Example 2.2), a pattern that encompasses the interval of the perfect fourth (F, G, Bb and C, D, F) appears in the right hand above the same interval in the left (m. 24). Such emphasis on the perfect fourth prepares for the arrival of the B theme, whose melody contains Eb D C Bb with the slower-moving bass line (F G Ab Bb) that is in contrary motion with the right hand (Example 2.3).
Example 2.2: Kapustin, Etude No. 2, introductory material in section B (mm. 23-26)

Example 2.3: Kapustin, Etude No. 2, theme B (mm. 27-34)

Since theme B is the most recognizable feature here, it is helpful to follow the three representations of this theme that take place within this section, observing their development and the surrounding events. The first two segments containing the B theme take place one after another, separated only by a bridge, at mm. 27-38 and 43-58. The first is in Eb, played in the middle range of the instrument. The second, in response to the first, is elevated to G major and begins extravagantly with wider spans. The interlude follows, which does not have the melody of the B theme but is based on the same harmonic progression. This is then followed by the last
representation of the theme, which serves as the climactic moment of the piece. Note that this theme is incorporated in Etude No. 8, as will be discussed later in the chapter.

One notable feature in the section, besides the representations of the B theme, is the bridge that precedes them (except for the first time, where the theme is preceded by an introduction instead). The bridge is a small segment of music containing ascending octaves in the left hand and an emphasis of a minor-second ascent in the right (Example 2.4). Being located in between sections (mm. 39-42, mm. 59-62 and mm. 75-78), the bridge statements raise the tension and prepare for the upcoming theme representations. The bridge does not directly influence the materials of the subsequent material, except for the case of the last entrance of the theme, which begins at m. 79. Here, the theme is in a higher register, and is interwoven into the inversion of the octaves that were heard in the left hand of the bridge, as if immediately responding to the agitation.

Example 2.4: Kapustin, Etude No. 2, bridge (mm. 39-42)

There is an obvious feature between the A and B sections that connects them - it is the tremolo figures that take place in various locations within the B section, which is borrowed from the outer segments of the piece. These figures do not clearly manifest themselves at the beginning; one is first found in an inner voice in mm. 27-28, and is unrecognizable as such at
that point because it consists of a single line and thus differs from the texture of the A theme. Moreover, this inner-voice motion emerges seamlessly from the introductory material preceding the B theme. The tremolo figures come to the fore only at m. 35ff into the bridge, forging a clear connection between the two contrasting sections of the piece. In addition, it may be possible to speculate that there is a connection between the ascending octaves in the bridge material with some of the left-hand figures in the lyrical section, namely in locations such as mm. 9-10 (compare Example 2.5 to Example 2.4).

Example 2.5: Kapustin, Etude No. 2, ascending octaves in the left hand (m. 9)

The closing material (mm. 91-119) after the last statement of the B theme once again incorporates the tremolo figures from the A section, creating a smooth transition into its return. This use of the tremolo material differs from the earlier occasion at mm. 35-42: in mm. 35-42, the tremolo figures are in the right hand while the buoyancy of the B section is maintained in the left. In comparison, the right hand at mm. 91-98 alternates these materials, creating a dialogue where the B section character (m. 91) is answered by the lyrical segment (mm. 92-93). Furthermore, the tremolo figures are no longer placed on the downbeat as before (Example 2.6). Starting from m. 99, the groups of two eighth notes, which have been found throughout the B section, are now restricted to the left hand. The right hand at m. 99 begins in a similar pattern as
in m. 23, but continues its movement in the tremolo figures, proceeding to the ending, which
takes place through groupings of six measures (mm. 99-104), seven measures (mm. 105-111),
then eight (mm. 112-119), as though slowly dissolving.

Example 2.6: Kapustin, Etude No. 2, beginning of the closing material in B section (mm. 91-94)

The unexpected sharp region is brought by the D major harmony over the bass of E at
mm. 112-119, which creates a transient uplifting effect, as if taking a last glance at the events
that took place in the course of the B theme development. This aptly prepares for the return of
the A section, as the F# in the top voice descends by a semitone, smoothly making its transition
into the chromatic descent in the melody with which the return of the A section begins. The
preparation for the return of the A section creates an impression not only of a change of
atmosphere, but a feeling as if comfortably sinking back into dreams. Also, since the Bb at the
top of m. 105 is followed by A at m. 109, the movement from F# (m. 112) to F (m. 120) becomes
a natural consequence, creating a seamless transition between the sections.
Example 2.7: Kapustin, Etude No. 2, end of the B section into next (mm. 118-120)

The returning A section is similar to the first time, but is elaborated, mainly due to the increased role of the left hand. Compared to the strictly accompanimental left hand in the first A section, the left hand now at times (especially in locations such as m. 128) provides some melodic contributions. This is because of the additional notes that are emphasized through the higher register and upward stems, creating another layer in some parts. The ending contains a hemiola again (m. 133), which is similar to the end of the first A section, but instead of simply extending the tonic as before, the left hand outlines the diminished seventh, creating a long descent to the tonic, providing a sense of relief.

Although the piece is relatively straightforward, there are various small details within it that can be explored. For instance, one of the most curious features of the etude is the connection between the various materials, especially the tremolo figures in the B section that is taken from the lyrical segment of the piece. This figure is first used in the B section in a subsidiary manner to connect one statement of the theme to the next. But in the closing segment of the section, it
plays a more proactive role, disintegrating the material and blurring the boundary between the end of the lively section and the beginning of the dreamy musings. Furthermore, it is upon reaching the peak at the third representation of the B theme that the tremolo figures begin to permeate the texture, thus functioning to convey the state of relaxation after an intense event, which creates a fresh implication for the return of the A theme. Investigating such various details in the etude can help one to discover the relationship between the two sections and understand how opposing materials define one another, thus greatly enriching the musical content of the piece.

**Etude No. 3, “Toccatina”**

Etude No. 3 has the title “Toccatina,” which originates from the word “to touch.” It requires not only velocity, but coordination and dexterity of fingers. The etude alternates the main theme (section A) with episodic sections (section B), varying and developing them throughout (see Figure 3.1). The writing is direct in many ways: it is mostly based on eight-bar phrases, which are tonally lucid. Unlike the first etude where the key centre remains unknown during the first section, the key centre of this piece is quite clear; the repeated-note figures are centered around the tonic, upon which the materials in the A sections are also based. One exception is the episodic B theme that undergoes several modulations, but in comparison to the persistence of the surrounding sections, it is rather transient in its effect. In such a way, this piece avoids the sense of ambiguity, and this straight-forwardness of approach creates the intensity and the sense of urgency that prevail. However, despite these factors, to fully grasp the ongoing development of the musical energy, the player needs to be aware of the subtleties within the
piece, such as the role of the introduction and repeated-note segments, and the continuous
treatment of the motive that can be traced throughout sections A-C.

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<tr>
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<table>
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</tr>
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<td>mm. 52-62 (11 measures)</td>
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<tbody>
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<td>mm. 63-69 (7 measures)</td>
<td>mm. 63-67</td>
<td>mm. 68-69</td>
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Figure 3.1: Kapustin, Etude No. 3, form

The keen-edged character is portrayed in the introduction (refer to Example 3.1),
especially in terms of its obtrusive harmonic and rhythmic features; it is concise and intense. It is
grounded on the E harmony, with pungent chords in m. 2 and m. 5. Along with the instability of
the 5-bar grouping, these grim harmonies set up the feeling of tension, as if foretelling the imminent unfolding of events. But there are more implications to it than just a setting of atmosphere: because the first two measures begin in a similar manner, it seems as though the accented C mm7 chord at m. 2 is responding to the first measure. Furthermore, because the top line in the first measure contains the notes B A C# D G F#, which can be distilled to a simple descending line consisting of B G F#, the note Bb in m. 5 seems to be almost “negating” the straightforward approach of the preceding segment. Similarly, the accented chords in m. 3 pick up where the first measure left off, resolving them with F#-E. But this is once again responded by the reiteration of G F# E in m. 5, whose cadential effect is negated with the C Mm 2/4 chord that supports it. Although a minute detail, this gesture is significant because, as I will observe in more detail below, it foreshadows the upcoming events: the notes B and A are repeated throughout the A section and are unable to descend to G F# E, and the feeling of incompleteness that results from this fragmented motive continues until the subsequent section with theme B, where the melody finally descends and resolves. Therefore, the tension that is created by these motives creates the driving force that travels across sections A and B, and it is the glimpse of this agitation that the listener witnesses during this succinct introduction.

[Allegro (♩ = 122)]

[Music notation]
Example 3.1: Kapustin, Etude No. 3, introduction (mm. 1-5)

The Bb, which is emphasized in m. 5, leads to the repeated E figure at the next measure which, due to the tritone relationship, gives it a much more ominous impression than if it were preceded by a B natural, or any other note for that matter. This is the first time in the piece where the repeated figure takes place. While bringing tonal closure to the introduction, its main role is to create the momentum for the subsequent material: The repeated-note figures are represented in two continuous segments, which are both preceded by a sixteenth-note pickup. The A theme does the same, beginning with the sixteenth-note pickup and proceeding in two-bar phrases. Furthermore, since the repeated figures are continued (with addition of some other notes) in the A theme in the alto voice, the A theme can be perceived as the extension of the repeated E figure rather than as a separate entity (see Example 3.2).
Example 3.2: Kapustin, Etude No. 2, repeated figure and the beginning of the A theme (mm. 6-9)

Overall, the A section is straightforward in its harmonic progressions and mainly consists of stepwise motions, thus temporarily clearing the tension that was created by the introductory material. The repeated E figure returns at mm. 14-15, but this time it includes a few more notes than the earlier version at mm. 6-7, showing that the development is slowly under progress. This leads to m. 16, where the A material begins its course again. The second representation of the A theme is an elaborated version of the first and includes more intricate harmonies, but the basic harmonic progression is the same, except for the ending, which goes to the dominant.

The A section is not melodically oriented, as it is the rhythmic drive, which is derived from the repeated E material, that plays a more significant role. However, it is possible to observe the top notes to see where they are heading. It is notable that only the notes B A E are used (with the exception of D in m. 9) for the duration of five measures here. Furthermore, mm. 8-9 and 10-11 emphasize the notes B-A by beginning and ending the phrases with them (see Example 3.2). Mm. 12-13 continue the notes B-A with A-G. This is carried over into the B section, which begins with the emphasis on A-G, followed by G-F#, which eventually leads to E (see Example 3.3). This motivic progression is quite fitting to the musical content because the repetition of notes B-A in the A section emphasizes its unsettled, acute tension of the rhythmic
play, while the descent of notes G-F#-E is underpinned by the steady melodic flow of the B theme and the sense of resolution that accompanies it.

Example 3.3: Kapustin, Etude No. 3, beginning of the B section (mm. 24-28)

As if enjoying the break from the motivic, harmonic, and rhythmic rigidity that has been imposed upon the A section, the B theme functions as an episodic interlude, providing a counterpart to the previous material with its daring and colorful harmonic progressions. For the first time in the piece, the phrase length steps beyond the eight-bar scheme and makes harmonic excursions: the right hand begins to reach upwards with sweeping motions as it takes flight through several harmonic regions, while the bass descends in a stepwise motion, widening the range and accumulating the listener’s anticipation.

The chromatic descent of the bass line at mm. 33-35 leads to the dominant that ends the B section, heading towards the third representation of the A theme that is now heavily modified (mm. 36-43, shown in Example 3.4). Incorporating interweaving of hands, this section is much
more developmental in character, as though it has been affected by the episodic B theme. The resemblance to the original version of the A theme is hardly noticeable, but in the fifth measure of the section, where the harmony navigates away from the tonic and traces the familiar path of vi-V-i, its connection to its earlier model (mm. 8-15) becomes evident. The repeated E figure that served to bridge the two A sections together earlier in the piece can be found at mm. 42-43, but it is not as obvious here because of the increased running sixteenth notes and fewer repeated notes, which makes it more melodic compared to the original version that is purely rhythmic in its function (mm. 14-15). Besides, its two segments are no longer divided by rests in both hands.

Similarly to the first set of the two occurrences of the A theme (mm. 8-23), the second representation of the A theme in this set (mm. 36-51) functions as an elaborated version of the first, being higher in register and more pronounced in character.
Example 3.4: Kapustin, Etude No. 3, the first return of the A section (mm. 36-43)

This leads to the return of the B section that has grown to be even more climactic. The hemiola grouping of the introductory material and the percussive rhythmic intensity that accompanies it, which was absent in the first representation, is infused into this episodic theme. After the enormous tension that has built up to the dominant harmony, the introductory material returns abruptly, which then leads to the fortissimo at the virtuosic closing.

The main dramatic force of the piece is created by two contrasting characters - the dark, intense, withheld A section and the liberating spirit of the B theme. It is similar to Etude No. 1 in its use of two contrasting themes, but while the first etude begins at the height of tension with the flamboyant first theme, this piece hints at the drama at first, but then makes the listener wait for
the B theme while sustaining its explosive energy at a subdued level. Therefore, it is the A section that creates the need for B, which acts as an outlet of energy. This relationship is apparent through the avoidance of descent from G F# to E in the first section, which is accomplished during the representation of the B theme.

The challenge in the piece is to maintain the feeling of suspense through the withheld energy during the course of various representations of the lengthy A theme, being careful not to lose the energy in the process or become overly mechanical in the approach. Also, the various materials of the piece - particularly the A sections - are rather similar in writing, partially due to the fact that they are in the same key. Furthermore, the repeated figures nearly permeate the piece. Due to such similarity of materials, the performer must clearly delineate the formal structure, and make an active use of the shocking contrasts of dynamics and the brisk shifts from one register to another that bring to the fore the dramatic character of intense urgency.

**Etude No. 4 (Reminiscence)**

The fourth etude, “Reminiscence,” flows with ease, avoiding the sense of predetermined direction and regularity in its process of development, reminding one of how memories unfold. In part, this results from the alternation of 3-beat measures and 4-beat measures that is maintained throughout (with the exception of the transition between two sections at mm. 23-24, where the triple-meter measure is followed by another). The thematic material undergoes considerable variation, but it is founded upon a singular motive that is used throughout the entire ABA scheme of the piece (see Figure 4.1). This motive is first seen in mm. 1-2 in the left hand. While maintaining the sense of unity through this motive, the piece moves through dramatic
phrases of development, making use of various elements of ambiguity and blurring of sectional boundaries.

**A: mm. 1-23**

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**B: mm. 24-44**

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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Diminuted theme</td>
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**A: mm. 45-71**

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<tr>
<td>Key:</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.1: Kapustin, Etude No. 4, form (*the markings “ascending” and “descending” indicate the direction of the first two notes of the phrase)

Although one may not immediately grasp the sense of regularity in the harmonic patterns at the beginning, there are some notable features here. For instance, the bass descends stepwise from B to A in mm. 1-2, and then C# to C in mm. 3-4. The next part, mm. 4-8 also ends with notes C# and C at the bass, followed by B. In this way, the descending chromatic motion comes to the fore at the beginning, which may be reflecting the sensation of surrendering and sinking in
a surge of memories. This is decorated with the right-hand filigree that often emphasizes patterns such as quartal and added 6 chords.

One of the most recognizable features in the A section is the grouping of the left hand, in which the bass is generally placed in the first beat of the first measure and in the second beat of the second measure (Example 4.1). Interestingly, this pattern of the bass creates the meter pattern of 4-beat measure + 3-beat measure; this is in opposition to the notated pattern of 3+4. This bass pattern continues until the concluding measures of the first group at mm. 7-8, in which it deviates from the given pattern. Since the low bass falls on the second beat of the measure and is held for two beats instead of one in m. 7, it gains a sense of stronger grounding, serving a cadential purpose.

Example 4.1: Kapustin, Etude No. 4, beginning (mm. 1-2)

The pattern is slightly disrupted again in the third phrase (mm. 17-23), in which there is an addition of an extra chord on the third beat of the second measure (m. 18), and is lacking the expected chord in the fourth beat of the fourth measure (m. 20). Then, at mm. 21-23, the left
hand deviates from the pattern even more, as none of these measures begin with the low bass as expected. This passage follows the ii-V-I cadential progression and has a closing function, resembling the way in which the left hand in the last two measures of the first phrase (mm. 7-8) deviates from the pattern to provide a small punctuation. Here, having finally returned to the tonic, it gives way to a new section.

At the beginning of the B section, the role of hands is completely exchanged (Example 4.2). The right hand plays the melody, while the 32nd notes are in the left hand, assuming a different dramatic role. In the A section, the left-hand chords provide the feeling of stability and security, while the 32nd notes in the other hand give a delicate, dreamy elaboration of the harmony. In comparison, the chords in the right hand of mm. 24-31 actively urge the developmental process, while the 32nd notes in left hand swirl turbulently rather than play a decorative role as before.

Example 4.2: Kapustin, Etude No. 4, beginning of the first stage of development in the B section (mm. 24-25)

The B section shows determination for the first time in the piece, going through three major developmental processes in a seamless and organic manner. The first is in mm. 24-31
(Example 4.2), in which the sequence consisting of the theme from the A section’s left hand takes place. The melodic lines here always begin with the ascending intervals and end with the descending stepwise motion, which differs from the first section that was inconsistent in this matter. With the momentum of the large ascending intervals, the sequence strives upwards, but then temporarily shies away from the excitement that has accumulated at m. 30.

The second stage of development ensues at the section that begins at m. 32, where each measure alternates the hands with which the melody is played (Example 4.3). This segment resembles the A section in its inconsistency of the melodic shapes, and the bass that is more grounded, especially in the beginning of measures. After four bars of the unstable dialogue that consists of the diminuted theme, the melody becomes divided into two hands in different registers, which now takes place within the span of a single measure (m. 36 and m. 37), accumulating the sense of urgency.

Example 4.3: Kapustin, Etude No. 4, beginning of the second stage of development in the B section (mm. 32-33)
This is then followed by the last stage of development at mm. 39-44 (Example 4.4), which consists of an upward sequence and a climax. The urgent pushing motion in the melody that begins at m. 39 is now consistently in the right hand, repeating the descending fifth motive and expanding it into sixths (mm. 39-40), eventually reaching the peak moment at mm. 41-42. This ascent (mm. 37-41) is supported by a chromatic descending line in the bass, which helps to provide a clearer sense of direction. Considering the extensiveness of the development and the intensity of the dramatic content towards this moment, the climax is rather short-lived, possibly reflecting the ephemeral quality of dreams and tribulations. After all, the etude has the title “Remembrances” - memories can flood the mind and then quickly subside. A sign of a descent can be detected at m. 43, and as early as three measures after the peak moment, the A section returns peacefully with the gentle rocking rhythm.

Example 4.4: Kapustin, Etude No. 4, the third stage of development in the B section (mm. 39-44)
The return of the A theme retains many factors from the tumultuous middle section, as if the previous section has not yet completed its thought. First of all, the initial chord is replaced with an E major chord (the reason for this is explained later). Also, there are additions of the dotted-eighth chords in the left hand. The added elaboration is especially noticeable in the section starting at m. 53, whose texture and use of the two hands resemble that of the middle section. However, despite all these differences that make it difficult for one to associate the return of the A section with the original version, both of these sections are nevertheless supported by the exact same harmonic progressions. As evident from Figure 4.2, the bass line of mm. 45-67, with the exception of m. 45, is identical to mm. 1-23.

mm. 1-8 and 45-52: \[ B/E \quad A \quad C\# \quad C \quad F \quad Bb \quad C\# \quad C \]

mm. 9-16 and 53-60: \[ B \quad E \quad D \quad G \quad C \quad F \quad Bb \quad Eb \]

mm. 17-23 and 61-67: \[ Ab \quad Db \quad G \quad C \quad C\# \quad F\# \quad B \quad B \]

Figure 4.2: Kapustin, Etude No. 4, Bass notes of A sections (with 5th progressions underlined)

One outstanding feature apparent from this chart is the long series of circle of fifths, particularly the extraordinarily lengthy one that begins with D in m. 10 and m. 54 and continues down to C. Such extensive use of fifth progressions reminds one of the lyrical sections from the second etude, which indicates that this progression may play a specific role in communicating the smooth, dreamy atmosphere that these two pieces share. Furthermore, as is evident from this progression, it makes sense that the expected B chord at m. 45 is replaced with E: Since the
return of the A section is preceded by its dominant, it simply continues the fifths descent through mm. 45-46, thus connecting the sections.

For two measures (mm. 64-65) just before the resolution of the final cadence, the exact same materials from the initial A section return, providing coherence and closure. The music again deviates from the earlier version upon the completion of cadence, proceeding to the tonic prolongation, with which the piece ends. Similarly to the end of the first instance of the A section, which finishes with the triple measure (m. 23), the ending of the piece also is with the triple meter.

Although the piece is practically finished in terms of harmonic progression by m. 66, the composer adds a small detail in the ending that may require extra attention of the performer. While the left hand plays the familiar motive, the irregular groupings of notes in the right hand that were hinted in places such as the right hand of m. 2 play a large role (Example 4.5). The right-hand figures in mm. 68-71 can be organized into a total of four patterns, all of them exclusively employing the black keys. The first is the four sets of nine notes, F# D# G# C# A# D# C# G# A# (mm. 68-69). The second is the eight sets of three notes, which begins with the third note of m. 69, G#, thus overlapping the end of the first pattern. The third pattern again overlaps the second and begins from the first note of m. 70; it consists of D# F# G#, D# G# A#, which is played twice. The last pattern consists of five sets of the notes D# G# A#, D# G# C#, thus continuing the same idea as the previous pattern.
Example 4.5: Kapusti, Etude No. 4, right hand, with brackets indicating the pattern (mm. 68-71)

It is notable that, with the exception of the middle C# at the end of m. 69, the right hand in this entire section consists of the fixed notes in the same register, D# F# G# A# C# D#. In addition, the left hand steadily plays the melody, also occupying only the black keys, with the exception of the last chord. Since the changes of groupings in the right hand take place loosely at the bar line, it is not difficult to grasp the pattern as a whole. However, since the groupings in the right hand obviously do not coincide with the beats within the bar, practicing with separate hands and internalizing the logic of the pattern is advisable.

The piece provides a clear contrast to the previous etude in its element of ambiguity, as explored in the analysis. It is fundamentally built upon a single motive, whose melodic integrity is rather questionable; it easily alternates its shapes and inversions, and is used in nearly every process of the piece. This may be indicative of the sense of breath-like flow that the motive creates that plays a larger role than its melodic quality. This is logical, since the 32nd-note figures are often not merely used as decorations, but have melodic substance as well, which
consequently divides the melodic role between the two hands. Furthermore, the two outer sections do not resemble one another except in their harmonic progressions. Also, the return of the A section retains many factors from the development, which again emphasizes the disintegration of boundaries between various parts of the piece.

**Etude No. 5, “Raillery”**

Etude No. 5 employs the 12-bar blues harmonic scheme, which is a suitable choice considering the title of the piece, "Raillery" (шутка), meaning "joke." The 12-bar blues form typically contains a series of chords as shown in Figure 5.1, which are often enhanced with various chordal variations and substitutions. This harmonic structure is the single most popular template for early jazz improvisation due to its compactness and wide range of possibilities, and is closely linked with a narrational, conversational character. Reflecting this form, this piece progresses in such a way that it begins casually as if telling a story and unfolds like a continuous chatter.

```
I   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9  10  11  12
I   I   I   I   IV  IV  I   I   V  IV  I   I
```

Figure 5.1: Blues harmonic scheme

The eighth-note pattern of the left hand is in the boogie-woogie style, and begins in the introduction (Example 5.1), which continues into the first refrain. The right hand also prepares for the refrain during the introduction: The top notes, F# A D at mm. 3-4 and F A D at mm. 7-8, are reflected in the figure with the triplets, with which the first refrain begins. Another feature
from the introduction that carries over into the subsequent material is the exaggerated emphasis on the tonic note, D. It is not only accented on the first beat of m. 1 and plays a large role in the left-hand figures, but also acts as points of beginning and arrival in numerous occasions up to m. 10.

Example 5.1: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, introduction (mm. 1-8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Refrain 1</th>
<th>Refrain 2</th>
<th>Refrain 3</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bridge 1 | “Swing 1” | Bridge 2 | “Swing 2”
| Location: | mm. 57-60 | mm. 61-68 | mm. 69-72 | mm. 73-78 |
| Length: | (4) | (8) | (4) | (6) |
| Acc. type: | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

Introduction | Refrain 5 | Refrain 6 | Closing (from Bridge 1)
| Location: | mm. 79-82 | mm. 83-94 | mm. 95-104 | mm. 105-108 |
| Length: | (4) | (12) | (10) | (4) |
| Acc. type: | 1 | 1 & 2 | 3 & 4 | N/A |

Figure 5.2: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, form
The first part of the piece contains four refrains that are played consecutively (see Figure 5.2). In the course of the first two refrains, the ostinato eighth notes of the left hand contain two types: type 1, which is first found in mm. 1-2 (in m. 1, the second note is an octave lower than in other locations), and type 2, first seen in mm. 3-4 (refer to Examples 5.2 and 5.3). Since the first ten notes of type 2 correspond to a part of type 1, these patterns are remarkably alike and continuous.

Example 5.2: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, accompaniment type 1

Example 5.3: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, accompaniment type 2

In the first refrain, the harmonic scheme of the 12-bar blues is quite evident, and the motive is the simplest and the most narrative-like in character. It has two fundamental features: first, it begins with the triplet figure (m. 9), which is repeated in every other measure. Second, it contains the closing figures with F E D. In the second refrain, the left hand continues in the same manner, while the right hand plays a variation of the first refrain. It uses the material from the first, inverting the order; the first measure of the second refrain contains the materials from the second measure of the first refrain, while the second measure contains the triplets that were
expected in the first measure (see Examples 5.4 and 5.5). There are other notable differences between them: Compared to refrain 1, refrain 2 places less emphasis on the high D that provides the sense of stability and insistence, thus gradually expanding the improvisatory range. Unlike the first refrain that contained groups of two measures in the right hand with similar melodic shapes, the second refrain has a larger span in the melody, which can be grouped as mm. 21-24 and mm. 25-28. The use of accents in the first two measures of these groups is more insistent than before. Also, these two segments contain the identical top notes that are supported by different harmonies, which consequently places an emphasis on the deviation from the pattern at m. 29 where there is a sudden change in the melody and its octave range. Furthermore, while the motive F E D was missing in the end of the first refrain, it appears in the third measure of the last group of four bars in the second refrain (m. 31), providing a sense of closure.

Example 5.4: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, beginning of the first refrain (mm. 9-12)

Example 5.5: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, beginning of the second refrain (mm. 21-25)
The third and fourth refrains can be coupled together like the first two. In the fourth refrain, which is placed in the same register, there is an improvisation of the figure E# F A that was seen throughout the first refrain and appeared again in the third refrain at m. 40. In this set of refrains, some curious modifications take place. First of all, the left hand plays different sets of notes than before (Examples 5.6 and 5.7) that are played in alternation. Also, it is remarkable how the 12-bar scheme is much less distinguished in these refrains compared to the previous parts due to the complexity of the melody and the obscure hypermetric groupings (see Examples 5.8 and 5.9). For instance, the triplet figures that were seen in only specific locations in refrains 1 and 2 begin to permeate the texture. Also, in m. 48 we see the first incidence in which a sixteenth-note figure in the left hand is used in a location other than during transitions from one refrain to the next.

Example 5.6: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, accompaniment type 3

Example 5.7: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, accompaniment type 4

Example 5.8: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, beginning of the third refrain (mm. 33-36)
Example 5.9: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, beginning of the fourth refrain (mm. 45-48)

The bombarding of the eighth notes in the accompaniment suddenly comes to a momentary halt and breaks loose from the series of refrains at the bridge starting in m. 57 that again outlines the descending blues scale, which leads to the “swing” section that begins at m. 61 (shown in Example 5.10). After this, the transitioning material in mm. 69-72 (“bridge 2”) leads to the second interlude. Interestingly, Kapustin plays mm. 69-72 with a swing rhythm in his own recording. He commented later that he forgot to mark this in the score, and that he was not as detailed with markings in his earlier pieces (Saito and Wada). The second interlude is one of the most lively moments in the piece, resulting from the rapid accumulation of excitement that took place in the first four refrains. The left hand remains relatively constant throughout the middle section, except for the bridge segments (mm. 57-60, mm. 69-72), where more rhythmic variety can be found.

Example 5.10: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, beginning of the “swing” section (mm. 61-63)
The introductory material returns immediately after the middle section, with which the first accompaniment type also reappears, continuing into the subsequent refrain. This refrain (m. 83ff) is stable and clearly recognizable in character, encompassing the octave range of both refrains 1 and 2. In fact, various elements from the first two refrains are combined here. For instance, the melody contains the figure E# F# A D that was frequently used in refrain 1, but in the context of eighth-note chords that are more reminiscent of refrain 2.

Refrains 5-6 are not grouped together the same way as refrains 1-2 and 3-4, since refrain 5 has left-hand types 1-2 while refrain 6 has types 3-4. The sixth refrain (mm. 95-104) is somewhat light-hearted in character, containing descending figures that are structurally equivalent to refrain 4 (refrains 4 and 6 are both placed just before the ending of a section, with both of them having a conclusive function). This refrain is slightly shorter than the others, containing only ten measures; this is because the last two measures of the refrain, which contains the bass note of C, are overlapped by the first two measures of the next figure (mm. 105-106). This figure, derived from the bridge leading into the middle section (mm. 57-60), brings a quick conclusion to the fast-paced chatter.

Although the piece seems whimsical, improvisatory, and even crude at times, it is possible to find coherence. The coherence is created with the underlying logic of the 12-bar blues harmonic scheme, as this form clearly offers a stable starting point (I), points in which actions arise and temporarily subside (IV-I), followed by a more decisive event that again returns to conclusion (V-IV-I). These logical implications of the form, which can be recognized within the context better by subdividing each of the twelve bars into corresponding inner parts and distinguishing their dramatic roles, can guide the player, especially through the more obscure sections, such as refrains 3 and 4.
Etude No. 6 (Pastoral)

Being one of the simplest in structure among the set, Etude No. 6, “Pastoral,” brings out its colors within the boundary of this stability, offering a fresh change from the explosive force and urgency that many of Kapustin’s other pieces present. Eight-bar phrases are maintained nearly throughout, within which small rhythmic variations take place (see Figure 6.1 for a formal diagram). Similarly, the harmonies are straightforward with the exception of a few segments, but there is a plethora of varieties within the etude that keeps the listener’s interest. However, the title “pastoral” is only relative: besides the simplicity, a slightly more moderate tempo and use of harmonies such as pentatonic chords, there is not much else in the piece that is pastoral. The analysis will probe the pastoral and non-pastoral elements of the piece, revealing how their balance shifts in the process of development.

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<td>to V</td>
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Figure 6.1: Kapustin, Etude No. 6, form
The harmonic progression in the first phrase (mm. 1-8) is quite simple, as the only harmonic notes that are not the part of the Bb scale are the Ab and Gb at mm. 5-6. The groupings of three notes in the right hand, somewhat reminiscent of the small-range groupings of the left-hand figures in *Etude No. 5*, emphasize the melody in the top line. The melody at first consists solely of four notes, part of which becomes playfully repeated. For instance, the motive Bb D C Bb is followed by a repetition of its last three notes, D C Bb, while F D C Bb is followed by its first three notes, F D C (Example 6.1).

Example 6.1: Kapustin, Etude No. 6, beginning (mm. 1-8)
The repetitive quality of the melody in the A section does not restrict the musical colors but rather enhances them, due to the ways in which a single note receives multiple reharmonizations. For instance, mm. 1-5 reveal how the note Bb can change the color as its supporting harmony changes. The same can be said about m. 6 and m. 8 with the note C. Furthermore, these notes are accented, making the differences more conspicuous (the use of accents is explained more in detail in Chapter 4). The technique of using motives economically and employing various repetitions and reharmonizations is characteristic of Kapustin, but what makes it particularly “playful” in this etude is the extreme simplicity of the melody and the stability of the underlying harmony.

After the second phrase of the A theme (which is a variation of the first, consisting of the same melody but with the slight variation in the left hand that is in groups of three sixteenth notes), the B section begins, which is shown in Example 6.2. Here, with a texture that is more sparse, the melody exploits the notes Ab and Gb that were seen in mm. 5-6. Also, rather than repeating three notes as in the A section, this part varies a four-note motive. The melody is again quite economical, spanning a minor third instead of a major third, retaining the three descending notes figure from the previous theme. Corresponding to the motive Bb D C Bb (m. 1) from the A section, the melody in theme B has a group of three descending notes - Ab Gb F Gb (m. 17).
Furthermore, the intensity of the accents in the B section (such as in m. 19 and m. 23) provides a contrast to the occasions earlier in the piece, in which the accents are placed in the end of every measure, serving as casual conclusions of the motive and emphasizing its different harmonizations. Here, the accent takes place only in the third measures of the four-bar groups, and has a more dramatic function, building tension and consequently creating the need for the upcoming C section, which is much more turbulent in character. This relationship between sections B and C is reflected in the measures that follow the accents (m. 20 and m. 24) in the B section with the surge of sixteenth notes, whose energy seems to be reflected in the C section with its ardent, impetuous character that clearly differs from the more angular writing of the earlier materials.

The C section (mm. 25ff), which is shown in Example 6.3, is the most tumultuous in character, going well beyond the narrow harmonic range of sections A and B. The basic motion that supports the C section is the descending perfect fifths, which proceeds through C#-F#-B-E-A-D-G-C-F throughout mm. 25-32. However, despite all of these differences, the section retains its connections to the previous materials: It has the four-note pattern of the B section, although it is with different set of notes and is less recognizable due to the density of texture. The last two
measures of the section, mm. 31-32, regain the texture of the B section while continuing the descending fifth motion, thereby concluding the developmental segment and leading to the next.

Example 6.3: Kapustin, Etude No. 6, beginning of the C section (mm. 25-28)

The same cycle begins at m. 33, where sections A, B and C return in the same order, but with some notable alterations in texture and character. First of all, although the left hand at the return of the A section is similar to that of m. 9, the right hand now contains octave intervals. Interestingly, the second phrase of the A motive in m. 41 becomes subdued, differing from its corresponding material in m. 9. The B section at m. 49ff. contains a series of octave intervals, which can be seen as a variation of the right-hand figures in mm. 33-36, employing a mixture of both ascending and descending figures, which is also highly contrasting to the first instance of the B section. The developmental C section that comes after assumes an even more dramatic role than before, offering one of the most technically challenging passages in the piece with wide
leaps in both hands. Not waiting for the expected completion of the full eight measures, the section quickly subsides, giving way to the coda that promptly brings closure. The coda takes the second part of the A theme (F D C Bb) but without the pitch C, thus outlining the descending Bb triad. The simplicity of the ending is emphasized by the complexity and dramatic content of the material that immediately precedes it (section C), which adds a light, whimsical effect to the impression of the piece overall.

As demonstrated above, this etude artfully brings out the element of simplicity to its advantage, creating the pastoral effect. This is possible due to the unifying element that makes sense of the turn of events, which is not only the melodic motive itself, but its various usages of accents. The accent is at first used casually with some reharmonizations, which is followed by the B section that emphasizes them in a more urgent manner, which creates the need for the upheaval created by the C section. Due to the accents that play those dramatic roles, the three sections are logically tied together; although sections A and C are vastly different from one another, the C section is not merely a contrasting part but is an eventual consequence of the previous materials. The method of using the alternate C section material to become temporarily liberated from the more regulated materials in sections A and B is similar to the use of the short episodic theme (theme B) in Etude No. 3, but while the third etude hints at the drama at the beginning of the piece and maintains the dark intensity throughout the course of the development, the sixth etude is overall much more less urgent, and its development more gradual and less impetuous.
**Etude No. 7 (Intermezzo)**

With an ambience unlike any of the other etudes in the set, *Intermezzo* has a repetitive harmonic content, with the melodic variations playing a larger role in the course of the development. Thematic ambiguity is also a significant feature here: the etude has themes A and B, but theme B can also be seen as a varied version of theme A (see Figure 7.1 for the formal diagram). These themes develop in such a way that they become nearly unrecognizable in various parts as the piece progresses. Because of these factors, the difficulty of the piece lies not only in the obvious technical issues of executing the passages with thirds, but in the conceptual organization of the etude as a whole.

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Figure 7.1: Kapustin, Etude No. 7, form
Upon exploring some of the features from Part I of the etude (mm. 1-38), one can observe the sense of continuity in the ways in which the materials are presented. The piece embarks with a four-bar introduction (Example 7.1) which, with its descending figures, creates a smooth transition to theme A (m. 5) that also begins with the descending thirds. In theme A (Example 7.2), the first eight-measure phrase (mm. 5-12) is followed by another (mm. 13-20), which begins in a similar manner but develops the idea further, making a brief divergence to E major. This is followed by theme B at m. 21 (Example 7.3), whose rhythmic scheme and accent patterns are quite similar to the theme A group.

Example 7.1: Kapustin, Etude No. 7, introduction (mm. 1-4)

Example 7.2: Kapustin, Etude No. 7, beginning of the first representation of the A theme (mm. 5-8)
Example 7.3: Kapustin, Etude No. 7, beginning of the first representation of the B theme (mm. 21-24)

There is a small difference in theme B that distinguishes it from the previous one: the first half of the phrase (mm. 21-24) employs the bass note pattern Eb Ab F Bb, and the phrase is organized in groups of two measures rather than four. The two phrases of the theme B group (mm. 21-28 and mm. 29-38) are almost identical to one another, except for the fact that the second one leads to the Db major cadence that marks the end of Part I. Being the very first cadence of the piece, this is a significant moment; up to now, every attempt to arrive to a cadence has been followed by elusive gestures that led to the subsequent phrase without any sense of closure.

Immediately following the cadence is a four-bar bridge in mm. 39-42, which can be seen as a varied version of the introduction due to its length and similar use of descending figures. After the bridge, one may expect a contrasting middle section. But instead, what emerges is a disguised variation of the A theme, beginning at m. 43 (see Example 7.4). Because this version of the A theme is written like a continuation of the bridge material, it is nearly impossible to perceive this as an actual beginning of the theme unless one pays close attention to the harmonic scheme. Furthermore, the descending third intervals, which serve as an identifiable feature in the A theme during the first part of the piece, are absent here, which is a crucial difference. The appearance of the B theme (mm. 59-74, part of which is shown in Example 7.5) is similarly
difficult to detect because the only resemblance to its initial representation (mm. 21-34) lies in the use of the harmonic scheme and the ascending minor-second intervals. This is the first of the differences in Part II - the return of the themes are blurred in such a way that it is difficult for one to detect exactly where they begin.

Example 7.4: Kapustin, Etude No. 7, beginning of the second representation of the A theme (mm. 43-46)

Example 7.5: Kapustin, Etude No. 7, beginning of the second representation of the B theme (mm. 59-62)
The second difference in Part II of the etude is that the two consequent representations of the same theme differ from one another more than before. For instance, the right-hand figures with thirds are introduced in such a way that the thirds begin to permeate the texture only in the second incidence of the A theme (mm. 51-58), where the accent pattern that serves as one of the notable features of the theme earlier in the piece consequently becomes less evident. As a result, the two consecutive representations of the theme are not as similar to one another here, making one feel that the first incidence of A (mm. 43-50) may not have much of a thematic significance but instead plays a more subsidiary role of transitioning between the bridge and the passage with thirds. Furthermore, the two incidences of the B theme are also more distinguishable from one another compared to how they were presented earlier because the second one is an octave higher. These differences characterize Part II to be quite different compared to Part I; while the first part of the piece is more repetitive and easy-going in character, Part II begins to take on a stronger sense of direction and is driven by various transformations, even within the range of the single theme group.

The themes in Part III are varied and elaborated quite differently than in Part II. Theme A, which begins at m. 75, contains the figures in thirds as in the previous section, and seems to be functioning as a mere continuation of it (Example 7.6). However, the bass is diminished, and no longer moves by quarter notes, but by eighths, as though urging for closure. Also, the harmony at m. 75 resembles the characteristic of the B theme group rather than A. This is followed by the diminution of the B theme at m. 83 (Example 7.7), which brings something new - the brisk triplet figures that contribute to the sense of forward direction. These figures are playfully harmonized in different ways.
Because the various reharmonizations take place with the same right-hand figures, small harmonic discrepancies are created, which also helps to generate excitement, leading to the grand moment at m. 90 that brings back the essence of the themes from Part I of the etude that became temporarily lost in the course of the development. This can be seen as a mixture of themes A and B, since it has the right-hand triplet pattern and the bass motion from theme A, while the influence of the B theme can be witnessed in the ascending second interval at the start of the melody (A Bb) and the use of two-bar groups. Because of how the themes become increasingly unrecognizable throughout the piece and how the closing sections undergo significant tonal instability, this return of the theme makes a strong statement that clearly foretells the upcoming ending of the piece.
Immediately following the return of the original themes appears a descending sequence in the right hand at m. 94, which is an unprecedented figure. The way in which the descending figures are used towards the end of the section to indicate the upcoming closure is somewhat reminiscent of Etude No. 5, in which refrains 4 and 6 begin with descending figures that hint the upcoming closures. In either of these cases, it is not a final cadential move by any means, but can be seen as one of the minor factors that contribute to the general feeling of imminent closure.

After the quick ascending passage at m. 97 (which corresponds to m. 38 at the end of the first section), theme B appears for the second time at mm. 98-101, once again bringing back the swift passagework that was seen earlier, accelerating the rhythmic motion to reach a highly energetic closure (see Example 7.9). This differs from the earlier version of this theme in various ways. In comparison to mm. 83-84, where only the lower notes of the right hand descend, this time the right-hand figures as a whole descend, possibly making its connection to the descending figures at m. 94. In comparison to the first B theme in this section (mm. 83-89) that begins with the bass movement of Eb Ab F Bb, this one contains the same notes that are placed in different order - F Bb Eb Ab (mm. 98-101), which makes the destination of Db a natural consequence of the pattern. Instead of employing playful reharmonizations as before, this figure now heads straight for the final cadence.

Example 7.8: Kapustin, Etude No. 7, beginning of the mixture of the original themes (mm. 90-91)
Example 7.9: Kapustin, Etude No. 7, ending (mm. 98-101)

In summary, it is the melodic variations and thematic ambiguity that create the spontaneous, less sectionalized impression in this etude. This feature is witnessed in the similarity between themes A and B and in the lack of expected closures in numerous locations. The ambiguity becomes more pronounced in the second section due to the unclear starting points of themes and the added differences between the two representations of the same theme. Part III is hardly recognizable as a variation of the original material, which creates the need for the grand return of the mixture of the original themes to appear at m. 90ff, as this plays a structurally significant role in creating the sense of conviction and relief.

**Etude No. 8, “Finale”**

The title of the eighth etude, “Finale” (similarly to the Etude No. 1, which is called “Prelude”), is suggestive of the role that this piece plays within the set of etudes as a whole.
Therefore, it is not surprising that the composer provides some notable connections to the earlier etudes. The ways in which the materials unfold give an impression that the piece may have been conceived more organically than some of the other etudes: it begins with a four-bar introduction, which is followed by four parts that are presented consecutively (sections A, A, B and C), as evident in Figure 8.1. These are then followed by a varied version of the same materials and a coda. The analysis shall mainly address the creative ways in which small motivic cells are developed throughout, and how various elements from earlier etudes are incorporated.

### Part I

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As expected, Kapustin links the introductory material (Example 8.1) to some of the significant features of the etude. Occupying two key locations in the piece, the four-bar introduction over the tonic harmony plays a large role in determining, or reflecting, the events in the subsequent materials of the piece. First of all, the first two notes of the introduction, C and D, are used in two ways during the first two phrases (mm. 5-8, mm. 9-12): the first is the large motion from the C that begins on the first measure and eventually moves to D in the fourth measure, and the second is the use of these notes as local punctuations, emphasizing the last two notes of the groups (C-D at mm. 7-8 and mm. 11-12), as shown in the Example 8.2. Although the second usage seems like a trivial detail, it nevertheless is a worthwhile issue, considering how the interval of second is emphasized through the groupings of notes and is developed consistently throughout the piece.
Example 8.2: Kapustin, Etude No. 8, beginning of the A theme (mm. 5-12)

Although the endings of the phrases in mm. 5-12 are harmonized differently (the second one is in the dominant of Eb major, possibly hinting at the upcoming B section), they differ from the introduction in the way that neither one reaches the next note, Eb. Such a way of withholding the note that was played in the introduction and creating tension is reminiscent of Etude No. 3. The expected Eb finally appears in the group of four measures that is outlined by the notes F-Eb (mm. 13-16), followed by the group with notes Ab-G (mm. 17-20), as shown in the Example 8.3. In such a manner, mm. 5-24 expands upon both the ascending and descending second intervals, on which the introduction is built.
Example 8.3: Kapustin, Etude No. 8, figures F-Eb, Ab-G (mm. 13-20)

The energy that is created by the motivic connections, as described above, is supported by the continuous texture of the accompanying figures. The short introduction, which sets up the momentum with the two sets of the running eighth notes with interweaving hands that outline the tonic, is again reminiscent of the use of the repeated-note figures in the third etude. It is also noteworthy that, because of the continuity of texture, the occasional eighth notes in the left hand play a particular role as punctuations (e.g., m. 2 and m. 8). The second representation of the theme A group contains the accompaniment figures that are even more seamless in texture, as the occasional eighth rests are no longer present. This continuous texture is indicative of how one needs to perceive this material; like the small motives that evolve, the supporting material is ongoing in its movement.

Breaking loose from the series of the intervals of seconds, the second incidence of theme A (mm. 25-46) takes a different turn; instead of using the descending motive of F-Eb as before, it rises from F, G, to Ab, following the example of the ascending notes C-D-Eb of the introduction (the use of these motives is discussed more in Chapter 4b). Although this is still part of the A section, it begins to take on an episodic color, especially with the help of a brief descending fifth sequence that takes place in mm. 37-41, leading seamlessly into the B section that has a similar
ambience. But the grouping of notes that emphasize the interval of second is still seen in various places. For instance, the second instance of the A section finishes with the added two-measure segment at mm. 45-46 that places further emphasis on the minor-second interval (Example 8.4), which is used again at the end of the phrase, at mm. 53-54. They also appear in smaller note values in various punctuation points, such as m. 44 and m. 50 in the melody. Another form of emphasizing the interval is through the use of accents: For instance, the C section begins with the accents on the notes G and F (Example 8.5), constituting a descending second, which are reinforced later (m. 65) through the dotted quarter-note figures. Immersed in the idiomatic jazz writing, it is of course not unusual for Kapustin’s music to contain a plethora of accented figures. But in this case, accents do not merely provide rhythmic gestures, but also play structural and motivic roles. Needless to say, the grouping of notes that emphasizes the second intervals in itself is not rare in any piece of music, but this piece is unique in the way that this particular grouping of the interval constitutes the basic building block in the music’s development.

Example 8.4: Kapustin, Etude No. 8, the second interval (mm. 45-46)

Example 8.5: Kapustin, Etude No. 8, the second interval through accents (mm. 63-64)
Besides the motivic features described above, there is another significant element about the piece, namely its connection to some of the previous etudes. The possible connection to the third etude has been mentioned earlier, but this connection is tenuous compared to the overt usage of the materials from the second etude. This is found in theme B that unfolds in a melodic manner, presenting materials that are almost identical to the B theme from the second etude. The way in which the first representation of the B theme is set up (with an addition of a two-measure group with a sudden piano marking in mm. 45-46) is quite telling of the importance of the material. Also, it is interesting that this theme in both of the etudes have similar functions and placement in relation to the rest of the piece. In both of the cases, this theme serves as an episodic section that takes place after the representation of the first theme (shown in Examples 8.6 and 8.7).
Example 8.6: Kapustin, Etude No. 8, B theme (mm. 47-62)
A similar connection can be found in the C section of this piece as well, as this material resembles the introduction to the B section of the second etude (compare Examples 8.8 and 8.9). The difference in this case is that it is used as an introduction in the second etude, whereas it serves as a developmental material in the eighth. In the eighth etude, it acts as a continuation of the previous material in the same key, but is more developmental than melodic, serving to prepare for the dramatic return of the A theme.

Example 8.8: Kapustín, Etude No. 8, beginning of the C section (mm. 63-66)

Example 8.9: Kapustín, Etude No. 2, introduction to the B section (mm. 23-26)
Since the music from the return of the A section to the coda is similar to the events earlier in the piece, I will limit the discussion to a brief description of events, noting some of the main differences. Having shifted to the lower end of the keyboard, the A motive here is represented in the most dramatic manner with the marking of fortissimo (mm. 95-102). The hands are not interwoven as before, but are completely separate, covering a vast range. Also, the second part of the A section (mm. 103-116) differs from the previous instance in the way that the extension of the dominant, on top of the interpolation of the C major harmony like before, adds six more measures to the expected group of eight. The second statement of A that begins at m. 117 is nearly identical to the corresponding one from earlier in the piece (m. 25ff); the only difference is that the note C that is in another register at m. 120, and that the second phrase is now in eight concise measures. The B section is in F major instead of Eb, and the rest of the piece maintains a clear feeling of the tonic except for the small deviations in the C section. The minor mode is restored at the closing section at mm. 169-180, which followed by a coda (Example 8.10).
Example 8.10: Kapustin, Etude No. 8, coda (mm. 181-192)

While already centered around the tonic, the coda carries the relentless energy through to the end, tying together the motivic elements from earlier in the piece, bringing closure to the set of etudes in a way that does not disappoint the listener. It is a natural continuation of its preceding material at mm. 169-180, which is derived from theme A, retaining the same five-note descending figure (C Bb Ab G F) as before. These figures are no longer followed by notes C and D, but instead include the unexpected Fb at m. 182, Eb at m. 183, then E at m. 185, which serves as a leading note to the tonic.

There is also a rhythmic twist in the coda (Example 8.10) that temporarily removes the listener from the clear sense of meter, which stands apart from the rest of the materials. There are three groups of phrases in mm. 181-185, with each one starting with the open fifth chord in the left hand, which is followed by the note C in the right hand along with a descending five-note motive. The first part, mm. 181-182, is grouped by seven quarter-note beats. The next one is partly diminuted at the beginning, consisting of six beats. The next part begins similarly to the second one, but places a stronger emphasis on the leading tone in m. 185, placing the subsequent tonic back to the clear downbeat. The tension created through the play of rhythm is maintained, as the ascending run at mm. 186-190 immediately takes over, followed by the final chords. From this material, one can point out couple of factors that link back to the previous sections: the
similarity of the ascending run to the intervallic patterns of the developmental C section, and the emphasis of the descending second intervals in the final chords, fitting into the motivic scheme of the piece as a whole.

This etude utilizes small motives and develops them organically throughout, while employing some of the features from the previous etudes. The connection to the second etude is the most obvious due to the employment of the same melody, but there seems to be a few hints to the third etude in terms of the use of the introductory material and the motivic manipulations. Furthermore, there may be a connection between the rhythmic pattern of the final chords with the beginning of the A theme of the first etude (compare mm. 190-192 of the eighth etude with the right-hand figure of m. 1 in the first etude). Considering that the set of etudes opens with this figure, it is completely logical that the composer would choose to close the set with the descending version of the figure that is closely related in its rhythmic pattern. Bringing various elements together in such ways, the piece lives up to its title, “Finale,” with its powerful dramatic content.
Chapter 4a: Creating a Healthy and Productive Internal State for Practice

Introduction

Now that the basic premise of the structure of Kapustin’s *Eight Concert Etudes* has been established in Chapter 3, we shall proceed to discuss its applications. The aim of this chapter is to incorporate one’s analytical understanding of the piece into practice and explore the ways of effectively communicating the insights in performance. This is necessary for performers because even if one were to spend hours investigating every detail of a piece, that alone would not guarantee that the result manifests itself automatically in performance. As pointed out by authors such as Jonathan Dunsby, understanding and explaining the musical structure is not the same as understanding and communicating music (Rink 36).

The reason that this point is emphasized is because of the conceptual gap that frequently takes place between analysis and performance. For instance, several accounts confirm that students tend to compartmentalize what they learn in theory classes and their performance-related classes into separate domains (Aiello and Williamon 176); they often have the mentality that once the work is handed in, their part is finished (Rogers 80). To not fall into this tendency, one must bear in mind that it is the responsibility of each performer to actively reinforce and internalize the analytical insights during practice, being aware that knowledge of musical structure does not merely manifest itself on paper, but rather, lives within the mind. And since there is no one-time solution to understanding music, practicing and analyzing continuously go hand in hand throughout every step of learning. This point has been illustrated in a study by Roger Chaffin and Mary Crawford, who systematically observed Gabriella Imreh integrate
analysis in the learning process and organize her practice according to the knowledge of the formal structure of the piece.

To demonstrate these points, this chapter will explore selected components from Nos. 5-8 from Kapustin’s *Eight Concert Etudes* and their possible performance implications. However, in order to bring the most out of this investigation, the chapter will first touch upon some basic issues regarding what constitutes a productive internal state upon which healthy practice can be founded, with the aim of cultivating the willingness and curiosity that is needed to discern the underlying structures of music and its possible implications. This segment will not be comprehensive, as it is only intended to set up the latter portion of the chapter rather than to provide a detailed account on this matter.

**Foundation of practice**

In principle, healthy practice consists of cycles that involve an attempt, obtaining of results, reassessing, realizing what to do next, repeating, and then going ahead to focus on other segments. This nonjudgmental openness, called “continuum of awareness” by Gestalt psychologists, allows one to be in a flowing, peaceful state of mind (Westney 77). Without making decisions in every step of the way, this would not be possible. In the same way that one needs to decide how to conceptually organize a given piece of music, one needs to be decisive in planning one’s actions during practice. While this seems like a simple concept, its significance cannot be underestimated: undecided matter is said to be the equivalent of throwing garbage into the future because such impending issues crowd the brain, creating an internal situation that resembles multi-tasking, which becomes the cause of counter-productivity (Klein, *Time* 183).
One must keep in mind that it is not only knowledge that strengthens the player, but action. Since humans are inherently hard-wired to derive pleasure from exercising control over one’s actions, acting decisively can have a liberating and empowering effect (Gilbert 47). It develops the sense of self-trust, thus setting up a productive practicing environment for the performer. In addition, one needs to be inventive in practicing, experimenting with ideas and being willing to take music apart as necessary rather than being defensive or consistently trying to preserve one’s current perspective of the piece. It is this initiative that one creates during practice that becomes the foundation of one’s psychological space and freedom in performance situations.

Needless to say, in discussing “decisions,” we are concerned with the interpretive decisions in conjunction with the mechanical. Rather than adding expression at the end of the process, one must synthesize musical feelings with each gesture during practice (Bernstein 48). This promotes better practice overall because decisions in one dimension are most likely linked with decisions in another: for example, fingerings, phrasing and expressive goals. Those who are inclined to leave the musical decision-making “until later” or “until when they know the piece better” often indefinitely refuse to take charge in interpreting a given piece of music. This applies also to cases when one is only practicing selected components of a given piece. Although this way of practicing may be perceived as “exercises,” they should not be treated as abstract, dry activities that stand on a separate shelf apart from the large scheme of musical experience. In fact, Ashkenazy comments that one needs to think musically even when taking one measure, or even just two notes (Noyle 7).
In order to practice in such a manner, one needs to make sure that the priority is set correctly. Sometimes one can be inadvertently focused on the notion of “doing well” or “producing results” without paying attention to specific musical ideas or feelings, which hinders one from being fully engaged in the process. Such rigid reliance on categories and distinctions such as success/failure can cause a mindless approach towards music (Langer, *Mindfulness* 11). Instead, one needs to tune into one’s own sensations of the moment and derive pleasure from them. However, this may be easier said than done because attention to one’s own sensory reactions is a factor that is frequently neglected in practice, which is an inclination that stems from early in the journey of music-making: When children are taught music, an excessive degree of emphasis tends to be placed on how they perform, and not enough on what they experience (Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow* 112).

Such awareness of one’s own sensory reactions is best elucidated by a concept called mindfulness, which entails a particular orientation towards one’s experiences. Mindfulness, a term that has become prevalent in psychology since the 1970s, involves being aware and curious about what is happening inside and outside oneself with acceptance and kindness, without judgment and criticism (Bays 3). Judgments would naturally emerge within the mind, but what is important is to recognize the judgments as they pass through the mind rather than to “judge the judgements” (Smalley and Winston 16). According to Ellen Langer, a leading psychologist in this field, mindfulness does not require altered state of consciousness nor involve methods such as meditation, as often encouraged in Eastern philosophy. Rather, it entails switching of the mode of thinking about the self and the world. It is the mentality where one does not try to change anything or create special effects or states (Brantley 44-45); rather, it is about regaining the sense
of being through peaceful awareness, thus “rebalancing doing and being” (Smalley and Winston 17). It is not an effortful experience, but instead, enlivening. According to Langer, it is human nature to seek lives steeped in such engaging experiences (Artist 3).

This stance allows one to act with much greater freedom and flexibility, as one gains the ability to recognize habitual patterns of thinking (Langer, Artist 16). This is an important point because one often has more freedom than one realizes to improve the perception of a situation, even without having a direct influence on the situation itself (Klein, Happiness 39). The controlling of emotions is frequently a matter of tenths of a second. If one is unable to recognize the feeling within this time, the negative feelings can develop a life of their own and become unstoppable because they become distorted by comparisons, thoughts and memories (Klein, Happiness 212). But when one is more attentive to the moment and the emotions as soon as they emerge, it is possible to be less reactive to the forces that throw one off the center.

Applying mindfulness in music

How does this apply to the process of making music? To be mindful is to maintain the soft gaze on the entire process of playing - even in passages that do not seem to have a significant role or require much attention, and even if what one hears is not on par with one’s expectations. One must constantly bear this in mind because subconsciously detaching oneself from the experience in such a manner can greatly undermine one’s connection to the music. Furthermore, one also needs to be able to return to the state of focus after leaving it for a while. This does not involve effort as long as one can re-neutralize the mind without self-criticism; it is
only the struggle to erase the unwanted thoughts that requires strenuous effort (Langer, *Mindful* 201-202).

One example of the lack of mindful observation is when one creates unrealistic goals with no regard to the circumstances and the peculiarity of the given occasion, which can cause anxiety and loss of motivation (Reubart 28). In fact, even successful experiences in the past can have an adverse effect if one is bound to the idea of living up to the previously-set standards. While it is helpful to learn from previous successful moments, what matters the most is the current moment because this is the ground on which one stands. In order to avoid inadvertently setting unclear or impractical goals, one must constantly ask oneself what one wants from the given practice at the very moment and decide accordingly with the circumstances, such as the current stage of learning, or the timeframe of practice. This allows one to not be preoccupied with ideals, but listen clearly to what one is playing at the given moment.

Another example of mindless practice is when one “strives” to be expressive instead of listening and reacting to what is at hand, replacing musical engagement with tension. One may feel that one is not caring enough for the music otherwise, but in fact, to care for the music does not necessarily imply strenuous effort; one can play without effort while being engaged and passionate in playing (Elson 30). Also, there are similar cases in which one replaces the emotional involvement with excessive movements of the body. In either of the cases, extraneous efforts lead to loss of connection with the actual energy from the music.

It is crucial for one to address such issues because they inevitably influence the degree of involvement in one’s musical experience. The more impending extraneous issues there are on one’s mind (i.e. issues that are not part of the musical flow itself), the less one is open to be
moved by the musical experience (Mogi 238). Therefore, when one does not address these issues, they not only influence the thought production, but cause one to become blind to what the music has to offer. In fact, when left alone, tension and discomfort can become embedded into one’s perception of a given piece of music. For this reason, it is not a surprise that distracting thoughts or lack of concentration that one experiences during performance are often not accidental - these thoughts simply accompany the issues that have not been addressed properly in practice. The player, in such cases, may be already accustomed to the discomfort, or has been accustomed to considering it as an accident, which makes it even more difficult to address the problem later on.

The two cases of mindless practice mentioned above both stem from inadequate awareness of the context, which implies the lack of wholesomeness in one’s approach: the first case represents the lack of consideration of the given situation, whereas the second one shows the lack of awareness of one’s own sensory perceptions. Such situations are often a result of insufficient acceptance and kindness toward oneself.

Acceptance and kindness, which entails one’s willingness to understand oneself, is the key to dealing with tension. Tension is known to be the foremost cause of performance anxiety (Reubart 33). However, once one understands its causes better, it serves as a helpful clue that can direct one’s practice. Instead of criticizing oneself, one needs to instead ask oneself why the body and mind react in a certain manner. For instance, physical tension can signify that the body is in a defensive state, and the tendency to rush in a certain passage can be a sign that one is subconsciously tempting to get by quickly “with the least damage.” Similarly, distractive thoughts can indicate that one is under stress and subconsciously seeking distractions (Langer,
Learning 36). It is helpful to understand that it is due to a natural human response towards the environment that the mind or body reacts in a certain manner.

In short, one needs to reflect on the causes of tension rather than focusing on the unwanted bodily reactions or thoughts themselves. Only with such an attitude toward oneself can one learn to detach oneself from the defensive mentality towards music. For this reason, mastery over performance is not about having a strong will or aggressive self-assertion; rather, it requires a mental softness which is about courage and self-discipline (Reubart 47).

Utilizing memorization

One of the methods for cultivating mindful practice is to utilize memorization as a means to internalize the musical structure and bring various hidden causes of problems to light. This notion is underpinned by various accounts such as those by Mark Westcott, who claims that memorizing early in the process of learning is helpful because the piece can “mature and develop subconsciously once it is memorized” (Elder 176). Needless to say, the effect that memory has on one’s performance depends from one individual to another, and its necessity in performance sometimes becomes a subject of dispute; however, whether one chooses to incorporate this into practice or not, it is nevertheless worthwhile experimenting.

What does Westcott imply by “developing the music” within the mind? Possibly, he is referring to creating networks within the piece through various ramifications of memorization. Memorization requires not simply retaining the notes that are written on the score, but for one to delve deeper into the context to determine the musical flow in which the notes belong. Therefore, memorizing makes one become more involved in making interpretative decisions, as
memorization and interpretation are always closely linked together (Chaffin, Imreh, and Crawford 23). For this reason, experienced pianists are known to be able to explain and describe the way in which they memorized (Aiello and Williamon 173). This is because they incorporate various multiple factors into the equation instead of relying on auditory and muscle memory alone.

As is evident from these accounts, memorization should be a process that involves profound musical engagement. This point is further elucidated by Kaplan, who points out that there are two related expressions, “playing from memory” and “playing by heart,” which seem like synonyms but are in fact different in their implications (91). He emphasizes that memorization should always be “from the heart,” implying that memorization per se should not be the primary focus, but that one needs to comprehend and express the meaning above all. Most likely, it is partly for this reason that memorization creates a clear difference in the end result; according to studies, memorized performances were rated consistently higher in terms of their musical clarity and communicative ability (Williamon 117).

As mentioned earlier, it is important that one does not wait until late in the process of learning to begin utilizing memorization. Memorizing in a rush makes one prone to hastily memorize the notes mechanically without taking into consideration the underlying connections and musical implications, thus divesting the player of the opportunities to take advantage of the benefits of memorizing. Rather, the process of memorization should be approached on a regular basis; although one does not need to constantly play by memory, the brain nevertheless needs to be consistently trained to memorize short phrases (Gieseking 12).
When one is engaged in the process of memorizing, it makes a difference in how one interacts with music even if the result does not immediately follow. This is because it encourages one to use the mind in such a way that the information can readily be retrieved and used. It is for this reason that Edwin Hughes recommends listening closely and memorizing very early in the process of learning a piece even if one can at first retain only a few points (600-601). Relying excessively on the score for a prolonged period of time can cause one to be in a passive state in which the information is not consciously organized, and is therefore not ready for immediate output even after adequate amount of practice. Or, as Gerle comments, it creates situations in which materials are stored in the brain in its entirety, but the memory “does not know what to remember, or, in computer terms, it has not been properly programmed” (76). In order to avoid this condition, one needs to actively convert passive memory into active, retrievable memory. This applies especially in pieces that are complex and intricate in structure.

One of the most accessible methods of memorization is to work on small segments at a time. The segment can be a single line, one hand by itself, or even just several selected notes, as long as the right balance between the level of perceived challenge and one’s level of skill is maintained. Furthermore, it is important to make sure that this activity does not entail excess tension. It is recommended to set a short time limit in which to attempt memorizing a specific passage. If it fails the first day, then it is better to reattempt the next day (Cooke 6). This is because conscious striving is prone to bring strain, with which the mechanism of memory does not function as well (Reubart 46). It is easier to understand the concept of this practice when compared to flash cards. One could begin from being able to glance at a phrase, look away and play, storing the information in what is called the short-term memory (Tsukiyama, *Organization*...
Although this is not the same as playing the segment from long-term memory, it is one step further from constantly having to look at the score, which trains the mind to focus and listen to that particular passage intently, helping one to give due attention to parts that otherwise may be neglected. This is an important point since, as Westney states, “no subsection of a piece is too humble to merit our curiosity and serious attention (Westney 86).

Memorizing small segments naturally promotes one to isolate the given part as solid “chunks” of information. This is quite useful because the more one encodes new information in terms of ready-made chunks (chord patterns, familiar harmonic progressions, etc), the easier it is to memorize, since it helps to perceive novel situations as variations of more familiar ones (Chaffin, Imreh and Crawford 198). This feature makes up for the bottleneck that the human mind has, which blocks one from attending to multiple amounts of information at once (that is why it is difficult to, for instance, follow more than one voice of a fugue at a time). Because of this neurological limitation, one needs to select pertinent issues from various cues and view information in larger groups in order to learn efficiently (Reubart 48).

The chunks of information that one attempts to memorize do not need to be restricted to the exact segment of music that is on the score, but can be in various other forms. There are various simplifying techniques that can be used in order to isolate and group certain issues: playing with one hand, or playing the basic harmonic reduction, playing selected melodic features, to name a few. One just needs to make sure that, although isolating issues provides one the luxury of preparation time and reflection, isolated elements are maintained when reinserted into the larger structure, coordinating the improvement within the continuity (Kaplan 62-63).
The advantage of memorizing is that it enables one to expose the various obscurities in one’s understanding of the piece through the mistakes that take place. Therefore, when coming across mistakes while playing by memory, it is better to not look at the score immediately to fix them. According to Westney, there are two cases in which mistakes are not properly addressed: The first is the type of denial in which one corrects a flaw so hastily that one is hardly aware of what took place. The second is suppression, where one ignores the mistake (Westney 68). In either of the cases, the player is aware of the mistake on some level, but is not in the right mentality to deal with it. In such situations, no matter how one tries to cover the mistake, the given passage cannot be registered in the brain as success, and mentally leaves unfinished business behind. Such ways of dealing with mistakes are often caused by the misconception that one cannot allow imperfections in the practice room (Westney 225).

In order to make the best use of mistakes, it is necessary to pay attention to what is happening within the mind rather than focusing only on the immediate result, asking oneself why the mistake took place. The types of mistakes that are not caused by temporary inattention are what Westney calls “honest mistakes,” which are immensely useful for productive practice because they reveal hidden issues (61). These can be either physical complications (e.g. an unnatural fingering that needs to be revised) or conceptual concerns (e.g. a chord that does not seem to fit into the expected pattern).

This implies that one must employ an analytical approach when practicing the correct version after the mistake takes place. Rather than simply reinforcing the correct notes on their own, one needs to deepen the understanding of their implications. For instance, rather than repeating to oneself, “this passage goes from notes C to E, not C to D,” one could say, “the note
C to E deviates from the previous pattern, creating a new sequence that prepares for the upcoming of the development.” By approaching the issue in this manner, one’s mode of thinking switches from the negative cues (such as “don’t go from C to D”) to positive cues that are based on concrete evidence (e.g. “follow how the deviation of the pattern takes place through the notes C to E”). This is effective not only because the brain registers positive cues better, but because it ties the notes into context. It allows one to reach the heart of the issue, which is what Alfred Cortot (who, incidentally, upholds that it is absolutely essential for pianists to commit everything to memory) considers to be one of the primary goals of practicing (Brower 30).

Sometimes problems do not manifest themselves as mistakes, but through mental “glitches.” This is a term that is used to describe the situations where, due to the lack of muscular coordination and organization, one part of the chain of movements breaks, which is followed by a loss of control in the subsequent notes. According to Kaplan, numerous musicians inadvertently repeat such broken chains during practice (64). Although he is referring specifically to the physical aspect of playing, it takes place psychologically as well. For instance, components of the musical structure that feel obscure (such as the function of a certain theme group that has not been determined) can cause the mind to doubt itself, causing loss of focus in the subsequent passages. In such cases, even if the problem does reveal itself in physical sound, it nevertheless hinders the musical rhetoric and the mental flow; since one part of the music relies on or reacts to the other, it inevitably affects how one perceives the surrounding parts and what they communicate.

By working actively with memory and becoming more sensitive to the “glitches” of the mind with the help of increased awareness to mistakes, one can smooth out the understanding of
the music. This is where the discussion regarding the fundamental stance of practicing, based on mindfulness and acceptance, ties into the act of analyzing: By becoming attuned to the desired feelings and ideas through reflecting on the piece analytically, and by mindfully bringing hidden issues to light using various clues such as mistakes and tension that surface during practice, it becomes possible to discover the causes for them. This can promote the economy of thinking, which is a notably pertinent issue in Kapustin’s compositions, as his music requires economy both in physical and conceptual realms of playing.

Conclusion

By working on the issues that obstruct the natural flow of energy, it is possible to deepen the engagement and focus that is needed to create the sheer power that is embodied in Kapustin’s music. The applications of these concepts are provided in the upcoming section of this chapter, which addresses Nos. 5-8 from Kapustin’s *Eight Concert Etudes*, Op. 40. The section will provide a summary of the salient points that were mentioned in the analysis in Chapter 3, and then expand on several selected elements, relating them to performance issues. Although it will not include discussions on pedaling and fingerings due to lack of space, it shall nevertheless cover some salient features of the music, such as the treatment of the left hand, accents, and organization of motives. The main purpose of this study is to explore how to create the mental economy and a natural form of attention that allows one to focus on the moment with the perspective of the whole, as discussed earlier.
Chapter 4b: Applications to Kapustin’s *Eight Concert Etudes*, Nos. 5-8

**Etude No. 5, “Raillery”**

**Introduction**

As discussed in Chapter 3, Kapustin’s Etude No. 5 is constructed of six refrains that follow the 12-bar blues harmonic progression. With the exception of the contrasting middle section, the texture of the refrains remains continuous throughout the piece with one idea leading straight to the next. Therefore, one must take full advantage of the narrative-like character that is created by the 12-bar blues format, and notice the factors in each refrain that differentiate it. Furthermore, in order to bring the improvisatory right-hand chattery figures to life, one needs a solid foundation of the steadfast drive provided by the ostinato bass. This section will include a detailed investigation of the left hand that was not included in the earlier analysis, focusing on the relationships between the patterns, mentioning some deviations in the patterns and exploring how understanding these features can be helpful in performance.

**The left-hand patterns and their relationships**

Leslie De’Ath strongly emphasizes the importance of left-hand independence in playing Kapustin’s music (2002). Although the usage of the left hand in Etude No. 5 seems simpler than in some of Kapustin’s other etudes due to its employment of set patterns, the similarity of one pattern to another demands the performer to be particularly attentive to details. Since we are already familiar with the four basic accompaniment types from the analysis in Chapter 3, the main point of discussion here will be their relationships with one another. For instance, types 1-2 and types 3-4 both contain shared notes amongst themselves, which can make one prone to
execute these notes using muscle memory without distinguishing the difference between them clearly. In this case, it becomes necessary to know not only which notes repeat, but why, and how it influences the logic between them. First of all, we shall look at types 1-2, which are demonstrated in Figure 5.3 below.

Type 1:  
\[ \text{C} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{E} \# \quad \text{F} \# \quad \text{G} \# \quad \text{A} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{A} \# \quad \text{B} \quad \text{C} \quad \text{E} \# \quad \text{F} \# \quad \text{A} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{Db} \]
Direction: \[ \searrow \quad \searrow \quad \searrow \quad \searrow \quad \searrow \quad \searrow \quad \searrow \]

Type 2:  
\[ \text{C} \quad \text{G} \# \quad \text{A} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{A} \# \quad \text{B} \quad \text{C} \quad \text{E} \# \quad \text{F} \# \quad \text{A} \quad \text{C} \quad \text{Ab} \quad \text{G} \quad \text{C} \quad \text{E} \# \quad \text{F} \# \]
Direction: \[ \searrow \quad \searrow \quad \searrow \quad \searrow \quad \searrow \quad \searrow \quad \searrow \quad \searrow \]

Figure 5.3: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, left-hand types 1-2, groupings of notes and their directions (the repeated notes are underlined, and the low C are in large letters)

These patterns have many notes in common, as one can see from the underlined portions above. However, this feature may not be readily noticeable because the low C emphasizes the beginnings of every four measures, taking the attention away from the repeated segment. Furthermore, the placement of the low C in the bass leads one to interpret the notes C G# A D at the beginning of type 2 as a condensed version of the first eight notes of type 1 (see the demonstration in Example 5.11 below). This gives an impression that type 2 takes an element of type 1 in a shorter format and provides it with a closure. This relationship between the two accompaniment types can be seen as an encapsulation of the logic of the 12-bar blues (which consists of proposing an idea and proceeding, and then taking the developed consequence and returning to tonic).
In addition, the interdependent relationship of the two accompaniment types is expressed in the directions of the groups of notes. Type 1 contains series of ascending groups, only with the exception of the ending that descends in order to connect to the next pattern (the notes with their groupings and directions are shown in Figure 5.3 above). In comparison, the descending line becomes more evident in type 2, where its second half basically outlines a descending blues scale, which contributes to the feeling of conclusiveness. It may be helpful to play the left hand alone and pay attention only to the feeling of direction, so that this relationship can be internalized.

Now we shall look at types 3-4, whose differences compared to types 1-2 are readily distinguishable. For a start, the low C no longer serves as the lowest note. Also, unlike types 1-2, it is the first six notes of each group that are shared: C, C#, D, A, C, D (see Figure 5.4 below, which again has the shared notes underlined). This feature clearly sets these patterns apart from types 1-2 because it incorporates a larger group of ascending notes, and because it makes the two seem identical to one another at first. The emphasis on these six notes may be explained by perceiving them as an elaboration of selected parts from types 1 and 2. As evident from Example 5.11 below, type 2 takes a section from type 1 and condenses it, while types 3-4 take the same material and expand it.

Type 3: \[\begin{array}{cccccc} C & C\# & D & A & C & D \\ \end{array}\] G F# F \[\begin{array}{cccccc} A\# & B & D & F & F\# & G \\ \end{array}\]

Direction: \[\begin{array}{rrrr} / & \downarrow & \uparrow & \uparrow \\ \end{array}\]

Type 4: \[\begin{array}{cccccc} C & C\# & D & A & C & D \\ \end{array}\] G# A C \[\begin{array}{cccccc} F & F\# & A & C & C\# & D \\ \end{array}\]

Direction: \[\begin{array}{rrrr} / & \uparrow & \uparrow & \uparrow \\ \end{array}\]

Figure 5.4: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, left-hand types 3-4, groupings of notes and their directions.
Example 5.11: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, left hand patterns 1, 2, and 3 with their related parts indicated

After the first six notes that are shared between types 3 and 4, what makes the difference between them is the direction of notes that follow. Type 3 has the notes G F# F right after the first six notes, which is novel in a way that it brings the descending pattern so early in the group (see Figure 5.4), especially since types 1 and 2 solely consist of series of ascending lines only with the exception of the ends of patterns. Furthermore, types 3-4 entail another change, which is the harmonic substitutions of V-IV. This is seen in mm. 41-42 in refrain 3 and its corresponding location in refrain 4 (mm. 53-54), and in refrain 6 (mm. 103-104).

As observed above, the point of this investigation is to find key structural features that allow one to distinguish one pattern from another, which namely lie in elements such as the lowest note of the group or the directions of notes. By studying the piece in such a way, one can understand that each of the patterns functions in a unique manner, despite the similarity between
them. Also, learning how the groups of patterns are coupled with one another and how one completes the thought of the other makes it possible to conceptually grasp them as a set.

**Other details to keep in mind**

Besides these features of the left-hand patterns, there are other small details to keep in mind, since the patterns are not simply repeating themselves in identical forms. First of all, while the types 1-2 and 3-4 are framed by the interval of a major ninth, there is a part in the left hand that deviates from the set patterns and emphasizes octave intervals instead, such as mm. 17-18. In these locations, one must rely on the octave range that is emphasized instead of the expected ninths. Also, it is notable that the first part of the figure cannot be clearly categorized into any of the four accompaniment types that are mentioned above, possibly reflecting the transient character that is created from its quicker pace of harmonic change (from V to IV).

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 5.5: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, groupings of left hand and their directions in mm. 17-18 (with the octave intervals in bold)**

Another deviation of the left hand can be found in the third and fourth refrains. Comparing mm. 47-48 with mm. 35-36 as shown in Examples 5.12 and 5.13, one can see that the third and fourth measures of these refrains slightly differ from one another. Although mm. 47-48 (third and fourth measures of refrain 4) are expected to have the left hand play the same figure as in mm. 35-36, there is an unforeseen descent in the last two notes of m. 47, which
makes this pattern sound like a varied version of type 3 at first. This alteration also causes the low C to be placed at the start of the fourth measure of the group, which is something that has not been seen before. One way to remember this detail is to pay attention to the direction of the right hand: While both hands contain an ascending line at the end of m. 35, both hands descend at the end of m. 47. Incidentally, the same issue takes place during refrain 6, in which the same solution can be applied: One can synchronize the left with the direction of the right hand line, since they both contain descending lines. As we can observe, although it is necessary to have the firm understanding of the left-hand patterns in themselves as mentioned earlier, the hands can at times be used to support each other, or play off of each other. This not only reinforces one’s memorization, but provides additional character.

Example 5.12: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, the first four measures of refrain 3 (mm. 33-36)

Example 5.13: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, the first four measures of refrain 4 (mm. 45-48)
Also, there is another detail that deserves attention, especially due to its physical implications. From time to time, the left hand contains additions of notes D and C (or D and D) in the top voice, as demonstrated in Example 5.14 below: this takes places in m. 8 (eighth measure of the introduction), m. 12 and 16 (fourth and eighth measures of refrain 1), m. 24 and 28 (fourth and eighth measures of refrain 2), and m. 86 and 90 (fourth and eighth measures of refrain 5). They consistently function to articulate the endings of four-bar groups. Although these changes may seem incidental, the added notes and the extended position between the low C and the next chord require the hand to be ready for them, which means that one must mentally “map out the position” swiftly. In this case, clearly audiating them and recognizing their role in underpinning the hypermetrical groupings of phrases can be helpful in being physically prepared for these changes.

![Example 5.14: Kapustin, Etude No. 5, added top notes in m. 12 and m. 16](image)

By grasping the left-hand patterns and their relationships to one another, and by keeping in mind the additional details as above, it becomes possible to maintain a larger perspective of the piece. This is because when one is conscious of which left-hand patterns one is playing, one is simultaneously aware of exactly what refrain that is, since certain refrains are accompanied by a certain set of the left-hand patterns (the diagram of the piece along with the left-hand patterns is provided in Figure 5.6 below). To understand this better, it may be helpful to play along while
looking at the diagram, being aware exactly where one is playing and which accompaniment type it entails. Of course, this process would take place in the subconscious level during performance, but by being particularly vigilant of such issues during practice, one’s trust in the left hand, and subsequently, trust in the knowledge of the structure as a whole, can be fortified.

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</table>
Conclusion

In this section, we have discussed the two main performance issues that one would inevitably come across in Kapustin’s compositions: the continuity of texture overall, and the treatment of the left hand, which we shall now recap one at a time. First of all, the continuity created by the interminable gush of refrains along with the ostinato bass can be compared to a train that is rapidly traveling down the rail. This effect is aptly used in order to bring out the character of “jokes,” or a type of storytelling where there is a rolling momentum from one part to another. But this sense of continuity must not lead to unthinking monotony where ideas are simply posed one after another without the player acknowledging their relationships. One needs to be engaged in what is happening in the moment, which was exactly the main point of the discussion in the previous chapter. And for that, fresh emotions and improvisatory character such as accumulation of excitement, surprise, and joy must be effectively communicated.

Secondly, in order for the right hand to become more free to be engaged in the moment in such a manner, one needs a strong foundation of the bass. Because of the continuity and the
resemblance of one pattern to another, it requires close investigation: It entails not only an understanding of each pattern in detail, but an understanding of the relationship between them, and consequently, a larger sense of network and the awareness of the divisions between sections that the various patterns imply. A listener who is new to the piece may be stunned by the brisk unfolding of events, but the performer needs to be able to mentally mark the separations between the refrains and differentiate the parts and their characters. By doing so, one can gain the ability to be fully be involved in each section and enjoy what each refrain has to offer.

**Etude No. 6, “Pastorale”**

**Introduction**

The charm of Etude No. 6 lies in its expression of simplicity. Mostly containing compact and stable eight-bar phrases, its main motive is quite economical, consisting of merely three or four notes in a small range that often entail playful variations and expansions. Furthermore, there are two factors that exert a large influence in this structure: the varying rhythmic value of the melody and the use of the accents. We shall investigate these features below. In addition, because these factors need to be nested in a stable foundation in order to be fully effective, this study will also include a brief discussion regarding the physical aspect of playing. Although it is beyond the scope of this research to delve into details in this area, it is not possible to entirely forego the topic, since none of the piece’s remarkable structural features can be brought out without this foundation, and because it is only through physical economy and efficiency that the character of simplicity can be communicated.
Rhythmic value of the melody

As mentioned above, one of the significant features in this etude is the varying rhythmic value of the melody. It is at times in dotted eighths, and other times in sixteenth notes, as demonstrated in Examples 6.4 and 6.5 below. The dotted eighth notes are used mostly towards the middle of the piece - namely in sections B1, C1 (excluding its second measure), and A3. It also briefly returns at section C3 and at the end in the second part of A5. The layout of the piece along with the indication of the rhythmic value of the melody is provided in Figure 6.2.

Example 6.4: Kapustin, Etude No. 6, melody in sixteenth notes (m. 1)

Example 6.5: Kapustin, Etude No. 6, melody in dotted eighths (m. 33)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>A1</th>
<th>A2</th>
<th>B1</th>
<th>C1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures:</td>
<td>mm. 1-8</td>
<td>mm. 9-16</td>
<td>mm. 17-24</td>
<td>mm. 25-32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony:</td>
<td>Bb+ to V</td>
<td>to I</td>
<td>ii7</td>
<td>Developmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melody:</td>
<td>16th</td>
<td>16th</td>
<td>dotted 8th</td>
<td>dotted 8th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>A3</th>
<th>A4</th>
<th>B2</th>
<th>C2</th>
<th>Coda (A5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures:</td>
<td>mm. 33-40</td>
<td>mm. 41-48</td>
<td>mm. 49-56</td>
<td>mm. 57-62</td>
<td>mm. 63-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony:</td>
<td>Bb+ to V</td>
<td>to I</td>
<td>ii7</td>
<td>Developmental</td>
<td>Bb+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melody:</td>
<td>dotted 8th</td>
<td>16th</td>
<td>16th</td>
<td>dotted 8th</td>
<td>16th / dotted 8th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6.2: Kapustin, Etude No. 6, diagram with the rhythmic values of the melody indicated
To clearly discern and internalize the difference between these two variations of the motive, the performer needs to understand their musical implications. First of all, when the motive is in sixteenth notes, it has the lightness of touch that influences the character, as one can witness at the beginning of the piece. In contrast, the dotted-eighth melody in section B1 creates a less light-hearted ambience. Being a continuation of this, the subsequent section, C1, is also in dotted eighths (in fact, the end of the C section at m. 31 brings back the texture of the B section, which reminds one that C1 is a continuation, or a development, of the previous materials). The same applies to the section that follows, A3. The motive in dotted eighths, which is seen in three sections consecutively (B1, C1, A3), is then brought back in C3 and partially at the end of the piece, in section A5. Here, it is notable how the sudden change in the rhythmic value coincides with the changes in harmonic direction: M. 63 begins the A theme in an expected manner with sixteenth notes, but then shifts into dotted eighths in m. 65, where the harmony relaxes in descending motion in order to prepare for the final cadence.

Bearing these issues in mind, it is necessary to effectively bring out the difference between the two rhythmic values in the melody, which requires minimal pedaling. Conversely, in sections such as C1, slightly more pedal may be helpful, because it is physically challenging to retain the held notes due to the leaps and changes of positions, and if one were to play the passage without the pedal, it would sound as though the melody is in sixteenth notes, which negates the continuous relationship from sections B1 to C1. Also, it is notable that the sixteenth-note motive in section B2 is in the highest range of the instrument, which makes the melody sustained with no regard to the pedal usage. For this reason, one needs to be conscientious with the staccato in this section, emphasizing the lightness of touch throughout.
The use of the accents

In addition to the varying length of the melody, the accent placement plays an influential role in the etude. As briefly mentioned in Chapter 3, accents are used differently here than in some of the other etudes as they are deployed in a regular manner and contribute to the overall feel of stability rather than create whimsical or improvisatory characters. Therefore, these accents should contribute to the shaping of the phrase, indicating clear musical intentions that relate to the expression of the given section as a whole.

Interestingly, the character of a given section seems to have a direct correlation with the regularity in the usage of accents. For instance, section A, which is marked by its regularity, contains the highest number of accents (with the exception of A3). Also, it is only in the end of the A sections that left-hand accents appear (with the exception of A1), providing a momentum towards the cadence. In comparison, the dimming of character in B sections is supported by use of fewer accents; C sections, which are the most episodic and irregular out of them, have even less. In fact, in section C2, where the melody in the right hand becomes separated from the rest of the texture, one could receive an impression that the theme is enjoying the continuity of phrase and the freedom from the regularity created by the accents. This feeling of liberation needs to be communicated in the C sections in order to provide more dimension to this piece, and to create structural meanings and the sense of purpose in the surrounding sections (the accent placement according to each section, along with their frequency level, is summarized in Figure 6.3).
Accent placements      frequency level (on a scale from 1-5)
A1 (m. 1ff): on the last note of both groups      5
A2 (m. 9ff): on the last note of both groups      5
B1 (m. 17ff): at the end of third bars       2
C1 (m. 25ff): none                               1
A3 (m. 33ff): none, except for m. 38       1
A4 (m. 41ff): on the last note of the second group     3
B2 (m. 49ff): at the end of third bars       2
C2 (m. 57ff): none, except for m. 58        1
A5 (m. 63ff): on the last note of the second group     3

Figure. 6.3: Kapustin, Etude No. 6, accent placements and the frequency of occurrence

The degree of persuasiveness in performance relies on making these accents fully come to life and enjoying the various implications that they create. For instance, due to its persistence, the repeated use of accents emphasizes the feeling of sameness, which provides an opportunity to bring out the differences when they take place. An example of this can be found at the first couple of sections of the piece: If the persistence of the accents is clearly communicated in sections A1 and A2, and if the cadence at m. 17 that concludes the accents is carried out powerfully, the subsequent section can become more effective as a result due to its subdued character and the sudden lack of accents. Such nuances of expression are possible only in pieces like this where its harmonic and textural simplicity allows one to enjoy the exaggeration of subtle differences.

Another example of contrast that is brought out as a result of repeated accents is found in section A4. Bb is continuously accented at mm. 45-47, expressing a buildup of energy towards the cadence. This resolves at m. 48, where the Bb reappears without an accent. Notably, the same takes places at the end of the piece, as mm. 67-68 have repeated accents, with m. 69 resolving them with the lack of accent. This jocular lightness of character needs to be clearly
communicated, since the way the piece ends influences the impression of the entire piece. In a way, the lightness of the resolution makes all of the repeated accents in the piece worthwhile, and gives them a meaning.

Lastly, one needs to be aware that accents can determine the length of groupings within the given phrase. In sum, the presence of fewer accents seems to imply a larger motion (e.g. mm. 41-42), whereas smaller intervals between accents can create many separate groups (e.g. mm. 45-46). For example, the motive in the first four measures in sections A4 and A5, which contains half the amount of accents as in sections A1 and A2, communicates the sense of a longer phrase that is pulled towards the end of every second measure instead of punctuating every measure. This creates an interesting narrative because it makes it seem as though these sections have been influenced by the impact of the preceding middle section, which contains almost no accents at all. These are the types of issues that can be reflected in performance and enliven the effect of each section.

Physical economy and efficiency

The nuances of the varying use of the accents and the lengths of the melody as described above can be brought out only when they are nested in the texture of stability. The surrounding notes must be executed with evenness, entirely unaffected by the accentuation patterns that take place in different groupings. In order to create this, one needs to pursue physical economy and efficiency. This can be well understood by watching any of the video clips of Kapustin performing his own works, as it serves as a witness to the account that the “highest measure in playing becomes possible when keeping the body quiet” (Gieseking 59). While physical economy is an issue in many of Kapustin’s compositions, this discussion is included here for the
following reasons: First of all, the clarity of writing in this etude makes the piece much more exposed. Secondly, it is needed in order to portray the etude’s character of ease and simplicity. As Reubart comments, it must be for the pursuit of the musical goals that one seeks technical solutions that brings minimum waste of physiological energy (142).

Since Kapustin’s music is written in a pianistically sensible manner, when one utilizes the natural movement of the body, it is possible to perform without straining or using excess force. And in order to use the natural movement of the body, one needs to equate the energy level and the sound that is produced, which requires coordination. But what is coordination? According to Reubart, one of the barometers of coordinative talent is the ability to throw - or as he comments, “to propel a playing unit (arm, hand or finger) by means of an appropriate muscular contraction, followed by its relaxation an instant later” (143). Lack of this inevitably leads to less velocity and power. In addition, a coordinated movement depends on the ability to employ “differential relaxation,” which is the ability to relax the muscles which are not needed in the achievement of desired result (Reubart 140).

In order to execute the movements in such a manner, it is necessary to be aware of the relationship between the two hands and finding “grounding points” within the texture. Specifically speaking, this means to understand the varying roles of each hand, distinguishing between the times when they can work together in a single motion, and the occasions when one hand needs to be more grounded in order to create the support for the other. Each of these is described below.

In order to make use of the parts where the hands can work together, one needs to be aware of when they contain similar motions or contain rhythmic punctuations upon which one
can focus. Within passages that contain numerous position shifts in both hands such as mm. 58-62, the awareness of the certain moments where the movements of the hands coincide can become useful as grounding points. Conversely, there are passages where one can benefit from knowing on which hand to rely: For instance, in m. 33, we see one of the many examples in the piece where the left hand needs to be investigated with care due to the number of leaps. Here, it is possible to maintain the gaze on the left hand almost the entire time because the only leap in the right hand is the major tenth, from Bb to D at the beginning of m. 34 and m. 36. It may be useful to play the right hand alone and look away from the keys between mm. 33-40, relying on the tactile sensation and increasing one’s awareness of exactly where the leap is located.

By understanding the interworking of hands and conceptually grasping the positions within the piece on which one can rely, one’s outlook of the piece fundamentally changes in such a way that one focuses on the sensation of grounding on the keys rather than on the leaps, which naturally makes it easier to execute the piece. Moreover, it promotes rhythmic effectiveness and the feeling of playfulness, since focusing on the grounding points allows one to feel comfortable and secure on each beat and to be able to “play” around them. It prevents the feeling of being suspended in the air, which can happen when there is a lack of physical internalization of syncopated rhythms.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that the basic notion of “playing economically” differs from simply minimizing one’s involvement. One must bear in mind that the purpose of economizing is ultimately not to simply preserve energy and be in a defensive mode, but to be able to give more energy as a result. And the “grounding points” that one can utilize in performance as described earlier are not for the sake of simply playing correctly, but to expand
the possibility of engagement with the instrument, and consequently, with the power that the
music embodies.

Conclusion

This study has explored several ways of finding points on which to grip, both in terms of
conceptual and physical aspects: It first zoomed in on two issues, namely the varying rhythmic
values of the melody and the accent placements that are used in combination to determine the
character of each section. Next, it touched upon some physical aspects with the goal of creating
the stable texture that can support these musical features. It entails focusing on finding
“grounding points” and pursuing economy. This is telling of how even small details in a piece of
music can be implications of larger issues affecting the musical structure and its purpose, and
how it translates over to the physical aspect of playing. Working on these small details and
creating the physical foundation for them would not be as rewarding if one does not think of
their networks in a bigger perspective and focus on the overarching expressive goals.

Etude No. 7, “Intermezzo”

Introduction

As explained earlier, this etude relies more on repetitive harmonic content than on
melodic improvisations, which creates thematic ambiguity. This feature becomes increasingly
pronounced as the piece progresses. Therefore, the key to performing the piece is to conceptually
clarify similarities and differences - i.e. to recognize when certain parts are variations of
something that is familiar (for example, the section with the consecutive thirds in the right hand,
which is a variation of the earlier theme although they hardly sound alike), and to acknowledge
the differences between its various components that are similar in sound but are structurally different (e.g. sections A and B in the first section). We shall explore some of the ways in which this can be accomplished: this study will investigate the ways of isolating various issues in practice while simultaneously strengthening their connections with one another. Engaging in these activities and incorporating memorization early in the learning process will, as mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, be beneficial.

Diagram practice and method

In practicing such pieces where their components can be easily confounded with one another, it is useful to incorporate some form of writing and create tangible reference points. When first learning the music, simply labeling structural functions of the parts on the score can be helpful, and can serve as an initial point in grasping some salient features of the piece. However, doing this alone can become a passive experience because incessant reliance on the score makes one prone to proceed without actively conceptualizing what is ahead. In order to address this problem, one can make use of diagrams, which can be considered as a type of mental practice.

The benefits of mental practice have been attested by many. Glenn Gould, for instance, was known to rely heavily on mental practice for preparing for recordings. John Browning comments that one needs to be able to go through the entire work in the mind while being away from the instrument, and that he felt unprepared to play in public until this could be done (Noyle 32). However, the abstractness of the notion of mental practicing keeps some musicians from employing it in the practice routine. Owing to their tangibility, diagrams can be helpful in
implementing mental practicing; a diagram serves as an additional form of visual aid that links the music to one’s conceptual understanding. Because visual impact has some influences on one’s perception of the piece, the diagram should be clear enough to be readily understood.

Figure 7.2 provided below is the example of the diagram in the simplest format, which consists of just the basic label of the parts along with the measure numbers.

**Part I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>A1</th>
<th>A1</th>
<th>B1</th>
<th>B1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mm. 1-4</td>
<td>mm. 5-12</td>
<td>mm. 13-20</td>
<td>mm. 21-28</td>
<td>mm. 29-38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part II**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bridge</th>
<th>A2</th>
<th>A2</th>
<th>B2</th>
<th>B2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mm. 39-42</td>
<td>mm. 43-50</td>
<td>mm. 51-58</td>
<td>mm. 59-66</td>
<td>mm. 67-74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part III**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A3</th>
<th>B3</th>
<th>A/B1</th>
<th>Coda (B3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mm. 75-82</td>
<td>mm. 83-89</td>
<td>mm. 90-97</td>
<td>mm. 98-101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7.2: Kapustin, Etude No. 7, basic diagram

Once the diagram is constructed in a simple manner as shown above, it means that the basic premise is settled, and that one is aware of how the piece is to be mentally structured. While there are various ways to make use of the diagram, one must proceed in small steps, depending on how far one is in the learning process. At this point, one may proceed as follows:
1) Look at the diagram along with the score, and play the beginnings of each section in order, acknowledging the differences and similarities of each component.
2) Look at the diagram without the score and play the beginnings of each section in order.
3) Look at the diagram without the score and be able to start in any section.
4) Be able to walk oneself through the piece with no diagram or score in hand, being aware of the starting point of each section.
5) Be able to play the starting point of any section with no diagram or score in hand.

When one does this type of practice on regular basis, it becomes possible to gain a flexible understanding of the music to start anywhere within the piece, which allows one to make a quick recovery after possible disturbances during performance (Chaffin, Imreh, and Crawford 198). This is because the mind is no longer thinking in the beginning-to-end mode, but can have a more active interaction between the specific spots to the concept of the whole during the performance, thus promoting oneself to not be over-reliant on muscle memory alone. Also, the order of events can have influence on the mind; for instance, the attention tends to be more readily given on the first occasion of an event, while its subsequent variations are treated as incidental and are not given enough attention. Therefore, changing the order of sections first and then playing them in order during practice can help clarify the relationships between various parts of the musical structure (Kaplan 92).

Addressing switches

By the time one proceeds through the first several steps of this exercise, some challenges are likely to surface, which is namely distinguishing between the locations that are similar to one another. For this segment of the study, we shall focus on a particular compositional device called switches. These are locations within a piece of music where the multiple repetitions of the same
material begin to diverge (Chaffin, Imreh, and Crawford 97). To make the correct decision regarding where the given switch leads, one must be aware of their locations in relation to the current location that one is playing. Since auditory and motor memory do not determine the correct switch automatically in such circumstances, the role of the conceptual memory becomes especially significant. Switch, needless to say, is an extremely common structural feature that bears significance not only in Kapustin’s compositions but in countless others. However, it is worthwhile to note them here in particular, since the focus of the study is not only to determine them, but to explore how one may perceive their implications by relating them to the musical scheme of the passage as a whole.

We shall focus on one incident that aptly demonstrates how one may approach such issues. This is at the first and second occurrences of the B theme in Part II of the piece. Although the first four measures of these instances are easy to tell apart due to the octave differences, their fifth measures begin in the identical manner; the only difference is that the accented chord in the right hand in m. 63 contains Eb, whereas it is an E natural at m. 71 (shown in examples 7.10 and 7.11 below). Note that this is the case in the “Советский Композитор 1987” edition and in the “Prhythm” edition, but not in the “A-ram” edition, as the version in the A-ram edition contains Eb in both of the instances. It is difficult to determine which version is the one Kapustin truly intended: it may be simpler to learn if both passages contain Eb, but a more interesting internal narrative can be created from the other version that contains Eb and E natural, as we shall discuss below.

In such a case, one can largely benefit from looking at the context that supports the difference of the note rather than just memorizing the notes on their own. First of all, they
emphasize the outcome of the phrase by providing harmonic contrasts: The accented chord in m. 63 is followed by a brief cheerful F major segment, after which follows an unclosed cadence. In comparison, its equivalent in m. 71 is followed by a half-diminished chord that briefly darkens the color, which emphasizes the expectation and the pull towards the upcoming Db major resolution. When keeping these in mind, it is possible to foresee the consequent events while playing these accented chords, as the differences of harmony fit into the context in a logical manner.

Example 7.10: Kapustin, Etude No. 7, the second half of the B theme in Part II, first occurrence (mm. 63-66)
Example 7.11: Kapustin, Etude No. 7, the second half of the B theme in Part II, second occurrence (mm. 71-72)

Creating cues

Now that the need for gaining a larger perspective of problematic spots has been mentioned through this small example, we shall return to the discussion regarding practicing with the diagram and investigate further implications of this activity. There is a reason why this practice places such a strong emphasis on beginnings of each section. The advantage of practicing in such a manner is affirmed by a study conducted by Chaffin, Imreh, and Crawford, who argue that the knowledge of the formal structure can be helpful in organizing one’s practice (190). According to them, the player can benefit from starting from points within the music that play important structural roles because it establishes these points in the mind as “retrieval cues,” or specific locations within the music upon which one can safely rely (206).

Strengthening the retrieval cues is a way of remapping the thinking in such a way that one can focus on the central intent behind each passage automatically rather than on the individual details or their difficulties. By deliberately rehearsing the retrieval cues that are associated with their expressive intent, one learns to elicit from conceptual memory all the motor responses and details that have accumulated during practice (Chaffin, Imreh, and Crawford 27). For this reason, the essence of the exercise does not lie in simply recalling each location
accurately, but in how one approaches them in terms of musical intent: One needs to establish one’s stance towards the particular passage and the musical flow.

Associating the passage with the expressive intent comes at a large advantage because having a clear musical goal creates a personal emotion towards the given passage, which is known to increase attention and motivation. According to Klein, one emotion can often convey more than a thousand thoughts, in the same way that pictures can say a thousand words (Klein, Happiness 24). Consequently, one’s attention would be much more likely to be attracted to stimulus with emotional significance. Therefore, as mentioned in the earlier part of this chapter, if one is not musically captivated by the music, one should ask oneself why, and discover ways to connect personally to the musical content (Reubart 56). After all, it is not only the knowledge of structure that helps one to internalize the music, but one’s reactions towards it.

This applies to physical aspects as well, as the cues can be used to connect desired physical sensations to particular locations within the piece. It is helpful to exaggerate and play “with big energy” in order to concretely feel what one does, so that the body remembers it later (Westney 58). For instance, one could practice certain components of the diagram with an exaggerated sense of physical release, so that the desired physical approach towards the given passage is not just an addition, but is ingrained into how one recalls the passage. It is useful to do so because no matter how well one practices, if one performs with a different muscle usage or body alignment due to reasons such as stage fright, it creates a different setup than what one is used to, undermining the performance. To avoid this, it helps to have certain locations serve as points where one can return the body to the neutral condition and focus on its musical intentions.
By practicing in the manner described above, one can gradually affirm that there are no awkward feelings or discordant thoughts surrounding the given passage. As mentioned in the first section of the chapter, being mindful of one’s mental reactions towards a given passage is a crucial part of learning, which can be applied in this practice. In order to do so, upon giving positive imagined shape to the actions and carrying them out, one needs to ask oneself after playing, “Did that feel good?” rather than only “Was it correct?” By working on selected passages mindfully, it becomes possible to close the gap between the two answers (Westney 88).

Lastly, one must note that retrieval cues that one creates during practice evolve as one progresses through various stages of learning. As the tempo is raised, one would need to decrease the cues that are of a smaller scale because the mind can handle only so much information at once; besides, overfilling the music with excessive points of musical emphasis can have an adverse effect, negating their meanings. Although the evolving of cues can happen naturally, one can facilitate the process by mentally rehearsing the entire work while focusing on the expressive goals in a larger scale, thus creating a new level of organization in the retrieval hierarchy (Chaffin, Imreh, and Crawford 171). Notably, this also makes it easier for one to plan the performance because one could then learn to pace oneself and shape the audiences’ experience through understanding the flow of the piece as a whole (Chaffin, Imreh, and Crawford 210).

Conclusion

As observed above, how one sets up each location of the diagram plays a crucial role. One must be always careful not to practice parts by themselves and leave them, as it creates an
incomplete version of the whole-part-whole learning process. As Langer warns, “getting our experience pre-sliced undermines the opportunity to reach mindful awareness” (Learning 23).

Let’s take the notion of switch, for instance. While being a simple compositional device, practicing them is not only about playing the correct version, but to take the surrounding issues and larger musical goals into account. That is what makes practice a unique experience where one solution does not fit all because it is up to each individual to investigate the music wholeheartedly. After all, analyzing is a way of raising question to oneself, which helps one to avoid the form of mindlessness that can result from accepting what one perceives without question (Langer, Artist 10). It is through the act of this constant self-search that one creates a deeply-rooted conceptual foundation of the piece.

**Etude No. 8, “Finale”**

**Introduction**

The primary concern that surfaced earlier during the analytical discussion of Etude No. 8 was its organicism of writing. The performer must affirm that the larger scheme of the phrase is visible and that the musical notion of the organic development comes to the foreground. In order to accomplish this, this section explores the thematic content of the endings of A sections and how they set up the theme that is quoted from Etude No. 2 (theme B). Also, we will discuss the importance of physical and conceptual economy, as this plays a large role in creating the meaning for the emergence of the B theme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>A a--------b</th>
<th>A a--------b</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mm.:</td>
<td>5-12</td>
<td>13-24</td>
<td>25-32 33-46 47-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motive:</td>
<td>C D</td>
<td>F Eb Ab G</td>
<td>C D F G Ab... Eb D C Bb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key:</td>
<td>(f-)</td>
<td>(f-)</td>
<td>(f+) same key as in Etude 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instances of Theme A, Part b

The B theme, as shown in Figure 8.2 above, is preceded by the second phrase of the A section (labeled as “b”). This segment of the A section plays an important role in the development of the piece, since it is what transforms the music that revolves around the grim tonic harmony into something that is more flexible and episodic in character. There are four of these segments in total, and we shall discuss them below.

The first instance begins at m. 13, which is the first time the piece goes beyond the tonic realm and the motive that revolves around notes C, D and Eb. It contains the main melody, F-Eb, Ab-G (Example 8.11). This is answered by the second instance at m. 33 that begins with the melody F-G-Ab (Example 8.12). While ascending to the same note, Ab, as the previous time, it does so directly up the scale without proceeding through a series of descending second intervals as before. Note that it contains three consecutive notes in an ascending motion, thereby giving an indication of the changes that are about to take place since there have not been any cases of three ascending melodic notes since the introduction. This is then followed by a chromatic descent in the melody and the addition of two extra measures (which have already been discussed in Chapter 3) that prepares the arrival of the B theme.
Example 8.11: Kapustin, Etude No. 8, F-Eb, Ab-G (mm. 13-20)

Example 8.12: Kapustin, Etude No. 8, F-G-Ab (mm. 33-36)

The B theme stands out in its reconciliatory character with the descending scale that provides a clear contrast from the unyielding sternness that is presented in the introduction and at the beginning of the A sections that use minimal amount of notes in the melody and emphasize obstinate pushing motions. Also, the B theme is in Eb major, which is a new key area in the welcome major mode. It is the same key as in the middle section of Etude No. 2, which helps one to notice the connection; it gives the impression as though one is looking back and recollecting the earlier events that took place in the set of etudes. In addition, this theme has a
particularly profound structural significance in the way that it entails the similar sense of blossoming as in Etude No. 2 (in which the theme brings the middle section to climax). In Etude No. 8, it exerts influence over the subsequent C section, which acts as a continuation to, and a reaction to, the B theme, as it remains in the same key and displays a whimsical play of rhythm, which eventually bridges the piece into the return of the A section.

The third occasion, which is not shown here, takes place at mm. 103-116, where the melody behaves quite similarly to mm. 13-24 with the motive F-Eb Ab-G. This makes sense, since it is the return of the original theme with extended range. But then, an unexpected event takes place in the fourth occasion at mm. 125-132 (Example 8.13). Here, the melody accommodatingly descends from F-Eb-Db-C, which clearly contrasts from the previous materials, as though indicating that the piece is approaching its conclusion. The remarkable feature of this motive is that it also reflects the upcoming B theme that is based on notes F-E-D-C (Example 8.14). This is the first time in the piece that there is such an evident connection and reconciliation between the two contrasting sections.

Example 8.13: Kapustin, Etude No. 8, F-Eb-Db-C (mm. 125-32)
Example 8.14: Kapustin, Etude No. 8, F-E-D-C in the B theme (mm. 133-136)

In addition to the occasions mentioned above, one could also look into the closing section that precedes the coda because it has a resemblance to the aforementioned sections in the way it begins with the same register of the note F that is played in the right hand. The resemblance may be vague, but the connection between them can become more evident by paying attention to the melody, which contains the notes F-G-Ab (Example 8.15). Using the same notes from mm. 33-36, this section finally provides the tonic pedal tone in the bass. Because the motive F-G-Ab was used earlier in the piece to lead toward the B theme in Eb major, by employing the same motive in a tonic context, it also creates a conclusion to the B theme as well. This then leads straight to the coda.

Example 8.15: Kapustin, Etude No. 8, beginning of K section before the coda (mm. 169-173)

The coda (mm. 181-192) is based upon a tonic pedal tone and does not contain any obvious connections to the earlier motives. Therefore, the last motive that one hears prior to the
end of the piece is F-G-Ab, which is quite telling of its structural significance. In summary, this motive serves as a resolution of the notes C-D-Eb that was heard in the introduction (where the harmony is in F minor, but the melody does not contain any tonic), as well as a resolution of the notes F-G-Ab in mm. 33-36 (where the melody contains the tonic but the harmony is in transition through Ab major).

**Conclusion**

Upon investigating these issues, it is useful to keep in mind that these underlying motives, which serve as the core essence of the piece, derive their power from their conciseness. Consequently, the running eighth notes in the accompaniment that surround them do not generate movement on their own, but are reacting to the basic kernels of energy that drive them. It is the motives’ economy of motion in contrast to the surrounding figures that creates the feeling of centeredness and power. For this reason, the etude has a type of energy that is withheld in many places, and differs from some of Kapustin’s other works such as Etude No. 5 from the set, whose middle section communicates all-out extravagance. This also needs to reflect in the physical approach; the tone must be focused without unnecessary scattering of energy.

In order to accomplish this, one needs to address the surrounding events properly. Scrupulously practicing all of the eighth notes, even with the best intentions, can place undue emphasis on them and undermine the result if they are not placed in context. One needs to keep in mind that the purpose of giving attention to details in practice is so that one could eventually return the attention towards the goal of communicating the overarching musical intentions, rather than dwelling on the difficulties. Among the methods that can help one to look beyond the
details is to think ahead by studying the score and practicing at a slower tempo while making sure to hear the events internally prior to playing them.

The motivic features described in this section pull the etude forward to realize its potentials. The process of how the withheld and grim motive of the A theme becomes manipulated and gradually invites the entirely contrasting theme to emerge creates the interest of the etude. This meaningful feature would not come across if one does not seek physical economy as well as the mental outlook that keeps the head out of the bustle and sees the piece unfold in a larger picture.

Postscript

Investigating a piece in such a manner can promote active interaction with music. However, as there is no single method in practicing that works for all or is to be used by itself, one needs to be open for other possibilities. In fact, in order to internalize the underlying structure of music in a more profound manner, it is necessary to incorporate various modes of playing and be accustomed to switching from one mode to another during practice. Otherwise, one can be inclined to sound overly preoccupied, lacking the assertiveness and the refreshing energy that Kapustin’s compositions embody.

One of the examples of such practice is to play through the piece from beginning to end in a “performance mode,” which teaches one to resist the urge to pause and fix various issues that emerge while acknowledging them. Another example is to play as freely as possible without attempting to remember all of the ideas from the analysis, simply reacting to what one hears; this teaches one to push the boundaries of comfort and experiment further. Because Kapustin’s music
can often benefit from enunciations of expressions, it is useful to engage in such activities so that one’s ears do not become overly accustomed to the same way of playing. These are the types of practice where ideas that were organized during analytical practice can come to life and possibly promote further interpretations. Many of the ideas in such practice sessions may be not used in the end, but the possibilities of interpretation would surely be broadened.

Furthermore, one may add that, while analyzing can help clarify the underlying structures of music, its purpose is not to entirely eliminate the element of uncertainty so that one simply follows a “script.” Such mindlessness freezes the responses and closes the possibility of change, causing one to not be centered in the present (Langer 14). This is the opposite of what analyzing is meant to accomplish. Analyzing should not inhibit one’s reaction to the music, but instead broaden the expressive possibilities by increasing the awareness of overarching structure and thus allowing one to be open to the present.

This can help the music feel fresh, which is especially helpful in Kapustin’s music. The improvisatory style that is implied in his musical idiom differs from that of jazz that is actually improvised on the spot, but the feeling of spontaneity should, in various degrees, be preserved. This can only result from one’s immediate reactions towards music, which stems from the comfort that is based on one’s firm understanding of the musical structure. In fact, this is a quality that any musician can benefit from in any composition; such freshness “as though one is improvising” is one of the remarkable traits of great artists that is telling of one’s richness of musicality.

Even if one were able to investigate every possible detail and all of their relationships within the given piece of music, the result would always differ. No two performances are ever
the same, which is one of the most intriguing characteristics of music-making; no person is exactly the same from one day to the next, and one’s reactions and feelings toward the piece would also differ to some extent, as well as the atmosphere created by the audience or the context of performance, which make the same composition vary in its meanings. As Anton Kuerti comments, one needs to imagine the music “as being alive during the performance, of displaying a will of its own” so that the details of performance are creating themselves in the instant they are heard” (Reubart 42), which implies that music needs to gain a life on its own in the realm of the ever-fluctuating reality. This is ultimately the quality for which one needs to strive.
Chapter 5: Mindfulness and Connection to the Instrument

Introduction

As observed during the discussion of the etudes in Chapters 3-4, examining structural features of music is a powerful tool that can serve as a foundation of practice in various dimensions. However, our study does not end here, as it must extend into some of the physical implications of playing. There are two main reasons for this. First is the impact that one’s physical involvement has on one’s feelings and perspectives. To understand this, it is enough to look into a few of the countless instances outside of the musical context: For instance, it has been discovered that simply standing in certain poses can create a chemical reaction in the brain that influences one’s feelings (Cuddy). Making certain facial expressions has related effects; muscular tension is known to be able to elicit the feeling of anxiety (Reubart 141). These accounts all reveal that one’s physical engagement can influence one’s very outlook on life’s experiences. This is underpinned by Klein, who states that thoughts and ideas alone do not enable one to experience emotions. For instance, if one wishes to fully experience pleasure, the sensation needs to be linked with the right body signals because it is through them that the brain constructs the perception of well-being (Klein, *Happiness* 11). Applying this knowledge to musical performance, one understands that a high degree of physical awareness during performance is indispensable for reaping the fruits of analytical investigations and thoroughly deriving pleasure from the understanding of the music.

The second reason for discussing the physical aspects of playing involves the nature of this particular composer and the etude genre. The essence of Kapustin’s music cannot be
understood without taking into consideration the notion of physicality and athleticism. Such virtuosic writing has a danger of leading one away from the finer side of one’s art (Lhevinne 46). However, when the physical execution is carried out purposefully and musically, it is not only impressive for the audience, but creates profound delight for the performer. Such pleasure through the teamwork of physical and mental engagement is one of the cornerstones of this discussion, as it serves as a primary driving force of Kapustin’s music. For these reasons, this chapter will begin with a discussion of the physicality of playing with a focus on the notion of wholesome involvement that stems from seeing oneself in perspective. This will then be tied into the mindful state of being that connects one’s physical engagement with the sense of engagement in the moment, thus returning to the issue with which the dissertation began.

**Wholesome approach to playing**

Because of the impact that physical engagement has on one’s experiences, one must avoid treating any activity purely abstractly or separating it from its physical aspects, even when the main intent of a particular practice is to address the structural concerns of the piece or to focus on isolated components. As Langer comments, one of the causes of mindlessness in any human activity is that one often relies excessively on moving the body (*Learning* 26); although one may assume that the mind would follow the body, this is not necessarily the case. Therefore, physical and mental aspects of playing need to be conjointly addressed on a regular basis with awareness. This takes place in two levels: a) cultivating the sense of the self as an integrated whole, and b) having the clear perspective of oneself in relation to the instrument, which shall be described below.
Cultivating the sense of the self as an integrated whole in playing is to first understand how the body works in harmony as opposed to just moving the fingers or hands. It is a misconception that only the hand is involved in playing: For instance, let us take the expression “integrating hands and head,” which was used during the analysis in Chapters 3-4 to describe the process of grasping the music intellectually in combination with muscular memory. Since this is just an expression that captures the essence of the act, it does not fully reflect exactly what happens physically in performance. Playing, in reality, does not simply revolve around one’s hands, but involves the whole body as a unit, utilizing the arms as integrated units as well. Most are, of course, aware of this, but when absorbed in the execution of the notes, one can be prone to lose such perspective and perceive the action of playing in an overly finger-oriented manner.

Furthermore, understanding how the body works as an integrated system would not be of any use on its own, because it is not the performer alone that makes performance possible, but the combination of the performer and the instrument. Neuhaus begins his book *The Art of Piano Playing* by reminding the readers about the three fundamental elements in playing, which consists of the work performed, the performer and the instrument (1). Although it seems quite obvious, this relationship not only needs to be understood logically, but must be felt and actively affirmed during performance because the first reaction when one is overly preoccupied with the results or is in the state of anxiety is to excessively focus on one’s actions and disconnect oneself from the surroundings, thus severing the communication with the instrument.

One of the ways to affirm that the pathway of communication between oneself and the instrument remains open is to actively grasp the hand positions within the topography of the keys. For this, it is useful to take into account the sight of the keyboard when practicing - i.e.
looking consciously at the keys from time to time, connecting the visual perception with the auditory and training oneself to be precise and swift with the use of the eyes. Notably, the essence of this activity does not necessarily lie in the actual physical use of the eyes, but in using sight in order to cultivate the eyes within the mind that captures the shapes of patterns ahead as one plays. The reason for the importance of this factor is because visual perception plays an extremely large role among the human senses (Tsukiyama, *Habits 101*). In fact, the eyes serve as the most powerful means of obtaining information. Therefore, when one is utilizing the eyes actively to receive information, the brain becomes more dynamically involved, which strengthens the connection between the player and the instrument.

In addition, since musicians vary from one to another in the degree to which they utilize different senses, one needs to not only know what works the best for oneself, but be open to compensate when certain sensory perceptions tend to become neglected, thus increasing the wholesomeness of the physical experience. For instance, it has been pointed out that some are inclined to rely overly on the auditory system, neglecting the kinesthetic experience and key contact that serves as the foundation of haptic memory (Reubart 93). In order to address such issues, one could practice prioritizing different senses than what one is used to - for instance, by playing selected passages with the eyes closed. Blocking one of the senses in such a manner forces the other perceptions to overcompensate, which trains the brain to incorporate the senses in a more balanced manner (Mach 136).

This discussion regarding a wholesome approach to the instrument brings us to the topic of fingerings, which is a pertinent issue in Kapustin’s music since many of his scores lack them. Interestingly, the ability to utilize the body in an integrated manner and grasp the hand position
accordingly can help create the most suitable fingerings for the player. The lack of fingerings is not necessarily a disadvantage, as it provides an opportunity for the player to plan them according to one’s physique and technique, while gradually building the hand positions and finger placements into the piece. (Incidentally, the same can be said about accents, about which Kapustin is quite specific in his markings: They need to be built into the piece as well, as they can largely influence how one utilizes the arm weight and balances the phrase in terms of hand positioning.) And since one must remain open to revise the fingerings as necessary in order to seek the most natural movement of the body while keeping in mind the expressive goals and anticipating the performance tempo accordingly, it promotes active interaction between the body and the instrument throughout the process of learning.

**Being fully present**

The discussion above is based on the notion of seeing oneself as an integrated whole, which allows one to be more aware of context - i.e. the awareness of where one is at the moment in respect to one’s surrounding circumstances. Achieving this can provide one with the sense of centeredness, which applies not only in terms of space, but also in terms of time. This notion of being centered, or being “here and now,” is rooted in the concept of mindfulness that was discussed in the previous chapter. We shall now revisit this concept from a different perspective.

The term mindfulness was mentioned earlier only in a mental context, but it is possible to apply the notion to one’s physical approach towards the instrument. It means to be in a neutral position, which is namely to be in an aligned state over the keys while being observant of one’s feelings and deriving pleasure purely from this sensation rather than being constantly absorbed in
action. This foundation creates the sense of readiness and flexibility, which makes one less prone to be negatively influenced by outer circumstances. However simple this concept may seem, it makes a difference in many facets of playing, because it requires one to prioritize the sense of comfort and pleasure in playing. It is to act on one’s own perceptions from moment to moment, which can be considered as one of the primary goals in practice (Westney 10).

The neutral condition of the body can promote the mechanism of release, which is an indispensable factor of healthy playing. This takes place in several ways. First, a neutral state helps one to be aware of one’s own body, which means that the body can be readily utilized (for instance, by first feeling the weight of the arms, it becomes possible to release them onto the keyboard). Second, it helps one to feel the position of one’s own body in relation to the instrument, which makes it possible to map out the position and determine the exact location to which the energy is released. Third, the aligned position of the body makes it possible to release the energy directly into the keys with no hindrances of tension on the way. In addition, mental issues play a large role as well, as release requires trust and relinquishing of the need to control, so that one can approach the instrument without excessive caution and physical timidity (Westney 90).

The action of release above all requires one to be physically engaged in the given moment. The reason is quite simple; due to the law of gravity, one cannot release the arm weight anywhere except at the current moment in the current space. This simplicity of action is aptly described by Lhevinne, who states that touch is “a matter of elimination of non-essentials so that greatest artistic ends may be achieved with the simplest means” (12). Also, since the action of release requires a high degree of sensory attentiveness even when playing just a single note, it
encourages the player be more attentive overall. In such a way, it creates the mentality of focusing on the task at hand rather than feeling that there is an impending task that is more important for which one must be preparing. It is for this reason that the primary fundamental building block of playing, tone production, can be seen as an accumulation of one’s mindfulness and engagement on a regular basis; it is a mirror that shows the level of communication that one holds with oneself and with the instrument that is carried on from one moment to the next. It is not without basis that Neuhaus considers the mastery of tone to be of utmost importance for performers (56).

And of course, none of these factors could take place without the incorporation of breath. Breath, particularly the exhalation, is where one can release excess tension. Therefore, although Kapustin’s music often has an impetuous character that is created by continuous outbursts of notes with hardly any breaks, to communicate the music effectively requires the support of ample physical breath. Refining the actions is never a problem once they make sense to the body (Westney 89). But nothing makes sense to the body if one does not breathe properly. Furthermore, actively incorporating breath into a given piece of music not only helps one to play with more ease, but can create a more profound internalization of the understanding of the music at a visceral level, because breath is essentially what creates the movement and flow upon which music is based.

The notion of release is especially meaningful in context of the etude genre, because it changes the implications of the physical challenge that it entails. If one retains the mindful awareness of the body and the feeling of release even in simple passages, then the challenging parts also become more natural since they can be seen as mere applications of the same
mechanism. When taking this into consideration, playing pieces that are known for virtuosity is no longer seen as something out of the ordinary, but as an extension of one’s ordinary interaction with the instrument. Furthermore, since the notes serve as the points from which one can release the arm weight from the support of the upper body, the profusion of notes in the etudes can be perceived as outlets of energy, which is consequently linked to the sense of pleasure. This is a significant point because such sensation is what helps the performer in creating the genuine sense of enthusiasm that Kapustin’s music embodies, as opposed to perceiving the etudes as a heap of difficulty that needs to be overcome. The notes are then no longer ends in themselves, but instead serve as a vehicle that carries the performer’s energy.

Conclusion

We have investigated the various issues that a mindful approach of playing entails, the diversity of which contradicts the common understanding of the notion of what is called relaxation. When one is anxious or suffering from stage fright, the tendency is to tell oneself to “relax.” However, this term can be misleading due to its lack of specificity and context, which can give an unclear signal to the brain that does not match one’s true intentions. In fact, Greene begins his book Performance Success by insisting that one must not try to relax in a conventional sense of the word before a performance (1). If one is to take the term “relaxation” literally in itself, then the muscles would be inactive and the joints collapsed, which does not equal a state of rest but of “deadness, with no functionality” (Fraser 42). The same applies to the action of release, which by itself does not serve musical purpose, because the dropping of the arm weight is simply a form of uncontrolled freedom. Rather, the aim is to achieve the capable form of
freedom that is created through a balance of relaxation and activity, which allows one to employ the arm mass in the most efficient way (Fraser 41). Therefore, rather than thinking to oneself during stressful situations that one is nervous and must therefore relax, it is better to perceive the condition as an “activation” (Greene 31). In this case, the state of tension is seen as a condition that is not to be simply negated, but utilized.

Healthy playing is rooted upon mindfulness, which is not based on being single-minded to control or make things happen, but instead centered upon trusting oneself and creating the right circumstances that naturally induce desired results to take place (Westney 88). This is the same principle as the discussion in Chapters 3-4 on creating mental focus, which can be summarized as follows: Instead of attempting to erase the unwanted thoughts or simply telling oneself to concentrate, it is necessary to first discover the features in music that attract attention naturally (for which analyzing is useful), and that one must listen to oneself during practice as the body and mind constantly give helpful signals along the way. In sum, whether it is in physical aspects or mental, one needs to have an ongoing dialogue with oneself. This is not a one-time solution, but an ongoing journey, and this process is exactly what allows one to be connected to the given moment.

It has been pointed out that many imagine the old-school pianists as fearless and invincible heros that could not admit to pains or anxiety or other mental issues (Chaffin, Imreh and Crawford 28). Kapustin’s performances of his own compositions are somewhat reminiscent of such figures, accomplishing dazzling feats with no trace of effort, being constantly objective in his approach to the music. While one could benefit from such objectivity and calmness, one must not be deceived from what one sees, because the process of learning his compositions, or
any other pieces of music for that matter, involves much more than anything that one can comprehend from merely watching the performance. Rather than living up to this image of the composer or his compositions, one needs to be more “human” in the process of learning, being in touch with one’s own perceptions and feelings. This allows one to discover one’s own natural musical flow through which Kapustin’s music can gain the power to move the listeners.

Once this is taken into consideration, one can take part in the uninhibited joy and the flood of energy that Kapustin’s music embodies, having reign over the technical details but at the same time releasing the music and allowing its spirit to surpass over the realm of control. After all, athleticism, with its origin being in the ancient Greek culture where people glorified their gods through works of virtuosity, is initially a form of celebration - a celebration of life itself (Shimizu). It is a way of bringing people together and connecting them at their deep roots. Learning Kapustin’s compositions and facing the challenges that they offer will enrich one’s involvement with music, which applies not only in his pieces but in other music as well; it can open one’s eyes to a broader horizon, thereby enhancing the possibility of life’s experiences.
Bibliography


