The pedagogical piano works of Elisenda Fabregas:
Teaching repertoire of different styles and contextualizing her work
in mainstream repertoire

by

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A REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MUSIC

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Approved by:

Major Professor
Dr. Agustin Muriago
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Abstract

This lecture-recital presents five pieces from the first two books of Elisenda Fabregas’ *Album for the Young*. These intermediate-level pieces are written in styles ranging from Renaissance to Modern periods. The goal in presenting these works is to analyze what technical and musical skills they develop, suggest ways to teach these pieces, and to explore their interaction with more traditional teaching repertoire.

The lecture-recital presents—pedagogical exercises developed to target specific skills needed to play these pieces; performance practice for each genre represented; and finally, pairs each piece with pieces by Bartok, Bach, Czerny, Kahlua, Clementi, Tchaikovsky, Chopin, and Debussy.

The works of Fabregas were chosen to promote the work of women composers and to expand the teaching repertoire that students and teachers are exposed to.
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I would also like to thank the other members of my committee, Dr. Slawomir Dobrzanski, and Dr. Jaqueline Fassler-Kerstetter for the time they took in reviewing my presentation. I am gratefully indebted to both for their helpful feedback on this project.

Finally, I must express my sincerest gratitude to my husband Aleksandr for providing me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study. This accomplishment would not have been possible without him. Thank you.

Rachel Baron
Dedication

Dedicated to my dear sisters, the strongest women I know—Tiffany Noel, Heather Nicole, Sara Danielle, Andrea Victoria, Amber Naomi and Abigail Louise who have been with me through thick and thin.
Chapter 1 - Biographical Information

Elisenda Fábregas was born in 1955 in Terrassa, Barcelona and is a renowned musician known for her style and flair in composition. She came from a family of amateur musicians, and although she showed talent from a very early age, pursuing education beyond high school was not the norm in her family. As a teenager, she “rebelled against the prejudices of the conservative upbringing and actively pursued musical studies”.

After obtaining her pianistic training the Barcelona Conservatory in 1978, she left for the United States. “She was carrying a recommendation letter from Federico Mompou and a certification from the American Institute of Studies in Barcelona saying that she could answer five basic questions in English: what, why, where, when, [and] how much”. With this recommendation in hand she began private lessons with Dr. Joseff Raieff so that she could prepare for her entrance exam into The Juilliard School of Music the following year. In May of 1979, she was accepted into Juilliard as a piano student and by May of 1982, Fábregas earned a Bachelor of Music and a Master of Music degree in piano performance in 1983. She continued her professional studies at Juilliard until 1985, when she started her studies at Columbia University Teachers college, earning her Ed. D. in 1992.

In the fall of 1993 she was appointed Assistant Professor of Piano and Piano Pedagogy at the University of Texas in San Antonio (UTSA) and from 2000-2002 she became an Adjunct Professor at UTSA so that she could compose full-time. In May of 2011 she was awarded a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Composition from the Peabody Institute of John Hopkins University.

Because of her long-term residence in three different continents (Europe, Asia and America), Fábregas’ music is considered cosmopolitan and eclectic. However, much of her inspiration for her compositions is from Spanish and Catalan poets and music styles. She is also heavily influenced by the flamenco and folk music of Spain. Her vocal works are based on texts by poets such as Federico Garcia Lorca, Antonio Machado, Josep Janes and even Fábregas herself. In her dissertation, Mary Etta Hobbs points out that Fábregas takes the medium of folk

2 Ibid.
music and develops it beyond its original boundaries, making her pieces “intensely dramatic” and exciting to perform.³

Although many of her pedagogical works were commissioned, Album for the Young was not. Fabregas composed in 2002, inspired to write pieces for intermediate players that would cover many styles. Volume 1 and 2 covers styles from Renaissance to Contemporary, and Volume 3 is devoted to Spanish style music – inspired by her heritage.

Elisenda is currently serving as a visiting professor at Kyung-Hee University in Seoul, South Korea.

Chapter 2 - Renaissance Style: *Elizabethan Dance*

VII. Elizabethan Dance

Figure 2.1: Album for the Young, Vol. 1, *Elizabethan Dance*, Reproduced with permission.
Pedagogical Analysis

VIDEO 1: Introduction and Elizabethan Dance

- Two unifying rhythmic factors
  - Dotted quarter
  - Tied 8th notes

Figure 2.2 *Elizabethan Dance* rhythmic chart

Figure 2.3 Theory Exercise
Chapter 3 - Baroque Style: Gigue

Figure 3.1: Album for the Young, Vol. 1, Gigue, Reproduced with permission.
Pedagogical Analysis

VIDEO 2: Gigue

Figure 3.2 Finger 5-1 Held note exercise

Figure 3.3 Finger 5-2 Held note exercise
Chapter 4 - Classical Style: Jogging

Figure 4.1: Album for the Young, Vol. 2, Jogging, Reproduced with permission.
Pedagogical Analysis

VIDEO 3: Jogging

Figure 4.2 Trill Exercise

Figure 4.3 Trills
Chapter 5 - Romantic Style: *Echoes from the Past*

Figure 5.1: Album for the Young, Vol. 1, *Echoes from the Past*, Reproduced with permission.
Pedagogical Analysis

VIDEO 4: Echoes from the Past

Figure 5.2 Chromatic exercise 1

Figure 5.3 Chromatic exercise 2
Figure 5.4 Articulation

Figure 5.5 Measure 2 fingering

Figure 5.6 Measure 6-7 fingering
Chapter 6 - Impressionistic Style: *Drifting Clouds*

**Figure 6.1:** Album for the Young, Vol. 1, *Drifting Clouds*, Reproduced with permission.
Pedagogical Analysis

Video 5: Drifting Clouds and Conclusion

Figure 6.2 Shadowing exercise

Figure 6.3 Held note exercise

Figure 6.4 Contrary B Major Scale

Figure 6.5 Contrary 2 against 3 B major scale
## Appendix A - Pedagogical overview chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Elizabethan Dance</th>
<th>Gigue</th>
<th>Jogging</th>
<th>Echoes from the Past</th>
<th>Drifting Clouds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style</strong></td>
<td>Renaissance</td>
<td>Baroque</td>
<td>Classical</td>
<td>Romantic</td>
<td>Impressionist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meter</strong></td>
<td>Common time</td>
<td>6//8</td>
<td>6//8;9//8</td>
<td>3//4</td>
<td>2//4, 3//4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dynamic Range</strong></td>
<td>mf, f, sfz</td>
<td>Haydn 62-65 Sonatas</td>
<td>mp, mf,</td>
<td>mp, mf, f, sfz</td>
<td>p, mp, mf,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greatest Span</strong></td>
<td>octave</td>
<td>octave</td>
<td></td>
<td>seventh</td>
<td>octave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Texture</strong></td>
<td>Homophonic: homorhythmic accompaniment</td>
<td>Polyphonic</td>
<td>Polyphonic</td>
<td>Homophonic: Broken Chord Accompaniment</td>
<td>Polyphonic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musical and Stylistic Considerations</strong></td>
<td>A majestic Renaissance style dance with syncopated rhythms and harmonies proper of the style. It is one of the few chordal pieces of the set. The student should listen to Renaissance music to familiarize himself with the style.</td>
<td>An energetic piece in the baroque style.</td>
<td>This piece rises both dynamically from mf to ff and chromatically from D-major to G, concluding in C-major</td>
<td>Waltz, Ice-skater like.</td>
<td>Contemplative and Floating Character imparted by the whole tone scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technical Considerations</strong></td>
<td>Play with supple wrists</td>
<td>Should be performed in a detached and non-legato manner.</td>
<td>Ascending-descending scales - Unison, parallel, or contrary motion.</td>
<td>Waltz with descending and ascending chromatic legato passages that glide through the keys just like an ice-skater. Staccato, tenuto and other articulation marks should be observed meticulously</td>
<td>The melody and accompaniment should be played legato with abundant pedal (as marked) to give it an impressionistic effect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pairing with traditional Repertoire</strong></td>
<td>Bartok Mikrokosmos Volume 4, no. 120</td>
<td>Bach, BWV Anh. 114</td>
<td>Czerny Studies, Op. 299</td>
<td>Tchaikovsky, Album for the Young Op.39, no. 9</td>
<td>Satie, Menus Propos Enfants, no. 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B - Copyright permission

Rachel Baron
Master of Music in Piano Pedagogy candidate
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Friday, February 2, 2018

Elisenda Fàbregas
Hidden Oats Music Company
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Dear Dr. Fàbregas:

I am completing a Master’s Thesis at the Kansas State University entitled, “The Pedagogical Piano Music of Elisenda Fàbregas.” I would like your permission to reprint in my thesis the following:

- *Album for the Young: for Solo Piano (2002) Volume I*
  - Elizabethan Dance, pg. 8.
  - Echoes from the Past, pg. 10-11.
  - Drifting Clouds, pg. 11-12.
  - Gigue, pg. 16.
- *Album for the Young: for Solo Piano (2002) Volume II*
  - Jogging, pg. 7.

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  - March 28, 2018 “The Pedagogical Piano Music of Elisenda Fàbregas” Lecture Recital by Rachel Baron at Kansas State University.
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Rachel Baron

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Name of authorized signatory

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