

The Suite

Suite of Mirrors is a collection of piano pieces for beginning students in which the two hands play together in contrary motion using the same fingering in each hand. The line played by the right hand is the *musical mirror* of the left hand's line—an exact symmetrical inversion of it.

The advantage of this “mirror” approach to teaching beginners lies in the natural ease that comes from the symmetry of the hands. Whenever the right hand's thumb plays a note, the left hand's thumb will always do the same, and so on. Students practice two-handed coordination from the very start, since both hands always play together in contrary motion. Notice that, unlike playing mirrored parts, playing the same notes with both hands (in octaves) requires the student to use different fingers simultaneously—the note that is played with the thumb in the right hand may be played by the pinky in the left. This is usually more difficult for beginners than the proposed mirror playing.

This book grew naturally out of my teaching sessions. The pieces began as simple outlines in pencil, often composed on the spot during my lessons. Over the years, my students consistently told me how much they enjoyed playing these pieces and asked for more of them. What's more, the mirror pieces produced good results—I found my students progressing more quickly and enjoying the process of learning when I used the sketches with them. I began to organize, develop and extend the sketches, and I quickly found that I had several complete ideas on my hands. Eventually, those sketches became the collection of piano pieces presented in this book—the *Suite of Mirrors*.

This is not an all-inclusive method for teaching beginning students. Instead, it is a group of interrelated piano compositions intended to complement the beginning student's practice routine and repertoire. These pieces quickly orient beginners' fingering and let them perform and internalize simple rhythmic subdivisions and relatively lengthy melodies, which builds confidence and dexterity and gives them the positive experience of creating something that “sounds like music” right from the outset.

As mentioned above, the collection is intended as a flexible tool—there is no single “right” way to play each piece. The finger-number scores are free of dynamics and tempo markings, but the educator should feel free to introduce dynamic indications, rhythmic changes, or tempo indications, and should welcome students' changes and suggestions. The pieces can be implemented differently according to each educator's methods and each student's needs. The goal of this introduction is to provide a set of general guidelines for the educator to help students get the maximum benefit and enjoyment out of the collection.