



Five-Finger Movements



- Q. What are they?
- A. A series of FOUR Piano Duets for Student & Teacher.
- Q. What's different about them?
- A. The Student's part uses a simple FIVE-NOTE pattern, with Left & Right hands an Octave apart throughout.
- Q. But this isn't new in itself, is it?
- A. No, but here in each of the FOUR duets, Student and Teacher get to swap over in the middle, and then back again near the end!
- Q. Doesn't this mean that there's a break whilst they change places?
- A. Not at all – the duets are designed so that the changes can be seamlessly, and indeed are all part of the fun – in fact, there's even some optional 'dancing' or 'clapping' during the changeovers!
- Q. So who are the duets aimed at?
- A. They're ideal for concerts or fun at the end of the lesson! They require good co-ordination from the student, to ensure that the fingers of each hand function together.
- Q. Aren't the rhythms tricky on paper?
- A. On paper, perhaps, but youngsters can very quickly pick up the rhythmic patterns, which are then reinforced by the score itself.
- Q. Do students enjoy playing them?

A. Very much so, because the Teacher's part provides most of the harmonic interest. However, because the **Student's** part is the 'tune' at the start, and the 'bass' in the middle, they realise that their contribution is absolutely crucial, and certainly no mere decoration!

Q. Are they difficult?

A. The Teacher's part could certainly be played by the more advanced student, whilst the **Student's** part has fingerings shown throughout.

Q. What do the 'pros' think about them?

A. Well-known composer of teaching-music for children and adults, Pam Wedgwood, said: 'I think your ideas are very sound and could work well!'

Q. Ok, so tell me a little about each of the FOUR duets.

A. In ***Five-finger Fox-trot!*** the **Student's** part uses the first FIVE notes of the G-major scale

In ***Five-finger Latina!*** the **Student's** part uses the first FIVE notes of the A-minor scale

In ***Five-finger Waltz-time!*** the **Student's** part uses the first FIVE notes of the F-major scale.

In ***Five-finger Disco!*** the **Student's** part uses a FIVE-note pentatonic scale using the black notes only

So each piece not only uses a contrasting rhythm and style, but involves a major, minor and pentatonic scale pattern respectively.

Q. Now can we have a look at them and see what you mean?

A. Yes, let's see how ***Five-finger Fox-trot!*** works. Here's the opening – you can see that the **Student** is shown his/her FIVE-note pattern at the start, and that fingerings are given in **red** throughout.

The **Student's** part is written **Two Octaves** *lower* than played, so as to avoid the use of leger lines. The **Student's** part is always carefully marked, in terms of dynamics and articulation.

EACH of the four duets begins in the same way, with the **Student** as *Primo*, and the Teacher as *Secondo*:

Five-Finger Movements
Five-finger Fox-trot!

PHILIP R BUTTALL

The musical score is for a piece in G major, 4/4 time, with a swing tempo of 160. It is divided into a Student part and a Teacher part. The Student part begins with a five-finger exercise on the treble clef, with notes G, A, B, C, D and fingerings 1-5, and 5-4-3-2-1. The Teacher part provides accompaniment. At measure 4, a purple scissor icon indicates a change: 'Play both hands Two Octaves higher!'. The Student part then continues in the bass clef, one octave higher than the original key signature. Fingerings are provided in red above and below notes. A triplet of eighth notes is marked in the Student part at measure 5. The piece concludes at measure 8.

This is the point where the first changeover occurs – note that the Student's part is now written in the Bass clef, **One Octave higher** than played, again to avoid leger lines – students very quickly adapt to the change from *Primo* to *Secondo* because their FIVE-FINGER position is kept intact.

44

To Coda

Move to bass end of piano!

To Coda

48

Play both hands **One Octave lower!**

mf

mf

Ped.

51

L.H.

R.H.

The opening part returns, as each duet is ternary in construction, involving the Student and Teacher in another change of seating!

The closing section involves the Student and Teacher in a fun routine of quick change from end to end, but which always gets a terrific laugh and cheer in performance!

♠ CODA

79

5 1 2 3 4

1 5 4 3 2

Move back to **treble** end of piano!

83

Dal Segno %

Dal Segno %

3 3

Quickly move to **bass** end of piano!

♠ CODA

♠ CODA

3 2 1 2 1

Quickly move to **bass** end of piano!

Play both hands **One Octave lower!**

4 5 4 3 2 5 1

p 2 1 2 3 4 1 5

Quickly move back to **treble** end of piano!

p

3 2 1 2 1

Play both hands **Two Octaves higher!**

Q. Great idea – tell me, who are they written by?

A. They're written by Philip R Buttall – Philip has taught piano at all levels for over 30 years, and was a school Head of Music before taking early retirement. He has had experience as an Examiner, as well as Syllabus Consultant, and his Compositions and Arrangements have been played worldwide, and by such prestigious ensembles as the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and the Ulster Orchestra in Belfast.

He regularly uses his solo piano music and duets with his students, who are always asking him to get the **Five-Finger Movements** out to play!

Q. So how can I get hold of a copy of **Five-finger Fox-trot!** or any of the other pieces in the series?

A. They are all currently available from the internet publisher, **SibeliusMusic**, or direct from Philip as downloadable **PDF** files simply to print out.

As a **Special Offer**, for a limited period only, they are available to download in PDF format as follows:

Any **ONE** duet (£6) / Any **TWO** duets (£11.50) / Any **THREE** duets (£16.50) / All **FOUR** duets (£20) – payment via *PayPal* or cheque

Philip R Buttall
Plymouth, February 2009

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