



MUSIC REVIEWS

Sight-Reading Skills for all Levels

GIA PUBLICATIONS, INC.

www.giamusic.com or

www.musicmovesforpiano.com.

WELL-TEMPERED READER (RED, BLUE, GREEN), by Marilyn Lowe and Garik Pedersen **Red Book G-7973, ISBN 978-1-57999-843-1; Blue Book G-7974, ISBN 978-1-57999-844-8; Green Book G-7975, ISBN: 978-1-57999-845-5.** Each book is US \$11.95

Marilyn Lowe, author of the new piano method based on *audiation* skills called *Music Moves For Piano* (MMP), has done it again! She brings to us much needed and pedagogically sound sight-reading books (with activities). These three books are not meant to be used in a sequential order but to be used according to the student's needs. They are well organised by the relative major and minor "keyalities", as she refers to them, with each keyality having five pieces to choose from. Some lesser-known repertoire from the Baroque and Classical eras, with composers such as J.C. Bach, Handel, Mozart, Kunz, Beyer, Czerny, Türk, and many others, is attractively presented. I particularly like the way the student must first think before plunging in, by responding to a few simple observations about Metre (duple or triple), Macrobeat (large note-value pulse), tonality and keyality. Gentle fingering reminders appear occasionally. Titles of the pieces are simple and students are given the chance to explore musical form and analysis, for example, by composing a middle section of a Da Capo piece where only the first section is given. And they can keep a log of other repertoire studied at the back of each book. The books are used in conjunction with *Keyalities and Tonalities: The Complete Book of Arpeggios, Cadences & Scales*. Eastern Michigan University Professor Garik Pederson gives introductory insights on the use of the book. Physical considerations are also mentioned with an important observation being that small hands do not naturally cover five keys (as most methods require) but are more at ease over four keys. These books are intelligently conceived, may be enjoyed

by users of any method, and may just spark interest into what MMP is all about, if not already captivated.

NLH

Music for Beginners

www.dogsandbirds.co.uk

Dogs and Birds Nursery Rhymes and Famous Melodies

Elza and Chris Lusher £9.95

The *Dogs and Birds* books are designed for teaching young children from as early as the age of three. They take a Kodály approach with ear-training and singing being an integral part of the class. Children learn to sing the music in solfa (doh re mi fa so etc) before they play it.

The books are produced in two forms: one for very young children where each note's letter-name has an animal – d for dog, b for bird. etc – and the music is printed with a little picture of the animal in the note-head or an ordinary version where the animals are still used but not printed in the note-head. The tutor's books have been available for a few years now and the latest books are arrangements of songs the children will know already. There is a great collection of 23 pieces, *Hot Cross Buns*, *Ode To Joy*, *Happy Birthday* to name but a few which children will love. They will also enjoy the colourful pictures and the rhythm exercises which can be clapped as duets or as two parts for one person. Note-stalks are printed pointing upwards for the right hand and downwards for the left – a little unusual but it does make it clear for the little ones which hand should be playing which note. Really great and lively material for teaching small children!

AF

Music for Elementary to Advanced Players

PIANISSIMO PP PUBLISHING

The Nine Glens of Antrim:
(Nine Easy Pieces for Piano)
A Strangford Sketchbook:
(Eight Pieces for Piano)
A Causeway Coast Fantasy
(Five Fantasies for Piano)

It is always a particular pleasure to review music by one of our very own EPTA members: June Armstrong, who co-founded EPTA Belfast in 1994, and

continued as an active committee member ever since. A staunch supporter of the EPTA UK Piano Competition, June often encouraged her own students to compose a piece to perform at the competition.

Now June Armstrong has published three volumes of charmingly atmospheric pieces of varying levels of difficulty and the Introductory Notes give the names of every pupil who premièred each piece. *The Nine Glens of Antrim* are stated as being for students of Grades 2-4, the *Strangford Sketchbook* is aimed at Grades 6-7 while the *Causeway Coast Fantasy* is at the most advanced level. All the pieces are inspired by Irish landscapes and the Introductory notes explain the characteristic of each place helping the listener or performer to better understand the character of this lovely music. June describes each Glen in great detail which enhances the musical expression. Often haunting, always enchanting with a strong Irish flavour, all the piano pieces offer technical and musical challenges to the students of the prescribed level of piano-playing. There are some 'takes' on Satie, Jimmy Kennedy and Wagner but with June's individual musical stamp superimposed, the end result is most successful.

In an article for *Piano Professional*, June Armstrong explains how she turned to composition after her 60th birthday and how, after spending time exploring various beauty spots in Ireland, she came home inspired to compose. It makes fascinating reading to find how the ideas just came tumbling out at the keyboard... These books are absolutely ideal for teachers and students of all grades who are looking for new repertoire to add to their programmes. Not to speak of the fact that they will be performing works by a good friend in EPTA.

NL

Music for Elementary Players

SPARTAN PRESS

Piano Suite VII- Collection £10
Piano Suite VIII – On the Gradient Road
by Lola Perrin
Lola Perrin plays LP 107 and 108 £16
Lola Perrin's Suite I was reviewed in the