

ROLL CONNECTION & PHRASING

Achieving legato phrasing is a fundamental skill for marimba players. Legato phrasing involves playing non-rolled notes with a relaxed motion from the wrist, moving the mallet off the marimba bar to allow for maximum resonance. In addition, rolls must be played with alternating single strokes, and connected without accents in the roll speed. The general rule for connecting rolls is to lead with the left hand when moving down the scale, and with the right hand when moving up. When moving to chromatic notes, lead with the mallet closest to the next note. There will be exceptions to this rule in later etudes.

Create a slight space and re-articulation when moving between rolls on the same pitch, as in measures 4-5. Likewise, a space should occur between a rolled note and a single note on the same pitch. A single note following a roll on a different pitch should be connected.

Be sure the etude has musical direction. Add a slight crescendo while moving toward the middle of the phrase, followed by a slight taper to end the phrase. The pitch of the bar determines roll speed. The lower the pitch, the slower the roll speed. Listen for a ringing sound with a minimum of "beat noise" from the mallet hitting the bar. Rolling too fast only increases beat noise without increasing resonance. Higher pitches require a faster roll so the note will have a sustained sound with no gaps. Use your ear to determine the best roll speed for each bar.

Rule: Maintain the slowest possible roll speed to maintain a sustained sound.

♩ = 88

mf

7

mf

12

mf

11

MORE AGOGIC ACCENTS

Etude 11 is in a fast three meter, and is more rhythmically complex. Agogic accents have not been indicated, and it is up to the performer to create an appropriate rhythmic feel. A slight added weight to the downbeats is necessary to telegraph the meter to the listener. These agogic accents must be performed within the context of the dynamics and overall phrasing of the music. Like etude 7, this etude should have a dance-like quality.

The staccato notes are difficult to achieve, adding velocity or using a dead stroke may create the effect.

♩. = 67

mp *mf*

5

9

mp *f*

13

mp

16

THIRDS STUDY

This etude features thirds, both as double stops and as melodic patterns. Be sure the mallets strike the bars simultaneously when playing the double stops; no flams. Use wrist controlled strokes, especially on consecutive double stop thirds.

Using slightly harder mallets may be necessary to bring out the high register passage in measures 24-32. Give plenty of time to each fermata.

$\text{♩} = 117$

5

9

13

17

f

mf

f

20

ARPEGGIOS

The final etude is built almost entirely of arpeggios with a few scalar passages and chromatic neighboring tones. Learn this etude by seeing and thinking each arpeggio rather than a series of unrelated notes. This may require some analysis away from the keyboard. Feel free to mark the music to help quickly recognize each arpeggio.

Begin practice at a very slow tempo using a metronome. Establish stickings from the beginning and continue to use them as you increase the tempo. Practice small sections at first and later put the sections together. The goal is a smooth, legato style throughout with no mistakes.

♩ = 100

p *f* *mf*

5 *cresc.* *f*

9 *pp*

13 *cresc.* *f*