

# Music: A Collaborative Affair

## Preparing for that first rehearsal

Introduction: Why I love collaborative playing, and what is a collaborative pianist, anyhow?

Part A: General tips on taking your first steps with a new collaboration, from a repertoire and instrumental point of view.

1. Familiarize yourself with the work. Listen, score read, sight read, etc.
2. What is the context? When was it written? Who wrote it? What medium? Is it part of a larger work we should know about? This is equally important for pianists as it is for instrumentalists and singers.
3. What is the text? Beyond just the general understanding of what is text for songs, but what is fundamentally written and intended by the composer/author. Form, melodic composition, word painting.
4. How the context shapes our treatment of the text:
  - a. Looking at songs: written translation, word for word. Word painting.
  - b. Looking at orchestral reductions: during a score study, write in the instruments.
  - c. Instrument-specific challenges: Breath, balance, other considerations.

Q&A Session:

Part B: Illustrating these points through specific examples:

**Piano Duet** - *Festive Dance* from *Concertino in Dance Styles* by Melody Bober.

1. Context: A student piece intended to teach important collaborative skills!
2. Text: Dynamics, articulations, pedal markings. Bober makes it clear.
3. Special considerations for this medium (and instrumentation): Matching articulations, shared musical gestures, melody division.

**Orchestral Reduction** - *Horn Concerto No. 1, 1st movement* by W.A. Mozart

1. Context: Concerto, orchestral score, classical era composer, sonata form.
2. Text: What's in the reduction vs what's in the orchestral score.
3. Special considerations for this medium (and instrument): Cuts in the score, "faking" the orchestral parts, interpreting instruments.

The Question of the Day: "Why are piano reductions so poorly written?!"

**Art Song** - *Les lilas qui avaient fleuri* from *Clairières dans le ciel* by Lili Boulanger

1. Context: From a song cycle, composed from a set of poems by Francis Jammes
2. Text: Describes flowers in an early Spring, juxtaposed with a previous Spring
3. Special considerations for this medium: Breath, tempo, balance, word painting.
4. Bonus: The incredible importance of context!

Q&A Session: