



EXERCISES

AND

ÉTUDES

FOR

DOUBLE

STRUNG

HARP

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INTRODUCTION Practice Strategies



After I have played the Kong Hou, a Chinese double strung harp, for 15 years, I developed techniques of my own for performing on this instrument, which can also be used for the double strung harp. Last summer I wrote down the exercises of my warm-ups for practice on the Kong Hou to meet demands of teaching the double strung harp.

Here are some practice strategies I wish to share with my colleagues, friends and students:

1. Many exercises use a single score. The stems up are played by the right hand and the stems down are played by the left hand. Some exercises are started by the right hand. In that case, the right hand is the leader and the left hand the follower. Others are started by the left hand. Now the left hand is the leader and the right hand the follower.

However, for most exercises, I strongly recommend that you practice both ways. No matter which hand I indicated as the leader, practice the reverse. In that way, both hands will develop equally strong, flexible for independent techniques.

2. All exercises are pattern oriented and repetitive. Repeat the same action over and over again in order to train the hand muscles for routine action. Our hand muscles are smarter than we think. We practice slowly to give our muscles a chance to feel and to remember each place and pattern automatically. Then we gradually speed up the tempo.
3. A beginning player of the double strung harp might feel dizzy to see two rows of strings, easily to become lost. Actually we don't see all the strings and fingers as we play. We only see the leaders and the strings which the leaders are playing. Therefore, to improve your both hands, keep your rhythm accurate and practice continual muscular motor coordination. These habits are retained in your memory. You will no longer need to watch your hands, fingers, or strings. You will play by the feel, almost automatically.

I. INTERVALS

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Exercise 1 Interval 2nd

L.H. R.H.
2 1

Exercise 1a. Interval 2nd

L.H.
R.H.

Exercise 1b. Interval 2nd

Exercise 1c. Interval 2nd

IV. ECHOING NOTES

Exercise 1b. Intervals

Joy Yu Hoffman

The musical score for Exercise 1b, Intervals, is written for a single melodic line in 4/4 time. It consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a 4/4 time signature. The first two measures of the first staff contain eighth notes with slurs and are annotated with fingerings: '2 1' and '1 2'. A diagram below the first staff shows a hand with the index and middle fingers numbered '1' and '2' respectively. The subsequent staves continue the melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, all slurred together. The piece concludes on the sixth staff with a final chord consisting of a quarter note and a half note.