

Lyric Preludes

in Romantic Style

24 Short Piano Pieces in All Keys
William L. Gillock

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About the Composer

William L. Gillock (1917–1993), noted music educator and composer of piano music, was born in LaRussell, Missouri, where he learned to play the piano at an early age. He attended Central Missouri Methodist College in Fayette, Missouri, studying both piano and composition with N. Louise Wright (1879–1958).

Even the earliest of his compositions show a rare inventiveness and originality of harmony and texture, as well as the Gillock trademark, melodic beauty. Called “the Schubert of children’s composers” in tribute to his melodic gift, Gillock composed numerous solos for students of all levels as well as ensemble music for students and their teachers to play together. He summed up his guiding compositional principle by saying that “melody and rhythmic vitality are essential to compositions that students want to learn.”

William L. Gillock was honored on five occasions by the National Federation of Music Clubs with the Award of Merit for Service to American Music. Perhaps his greatest honor, though, is the continued and frequent appearance of his pieces on repertoire lists for piano festivals everywhere. His music has achieved tremendous popularity worldwide.



About the Performer

Dr. Henry Doskey possesses a singular knowledge of the works and teachings of William L. Gillock. A piano student of Gillock during the composition of the *Lyric Preludes in Romantic Style*, Doskey played many of them from the original manuscripts even before publication. The two remained friends for over 35 years; Gillock even designated Doskey as the “authoritative interpreter, and judge of authenticity of stylistic treatment” of his music. Dr. Doskey has recorded (for Green Mill Recordings) the complete piano music of Gillock, as well as the complete *Préludes* by Debussy and selected works of Ravel and Satie. He is currently on the piano faculty at the East Carolina University School of Music in Greenville, North Carolina.



About the Performance Notes

In the mid-1980s, as work in earnest began on the revised edition of the *Lyric Preludes in Romantic Style*, William L. Gillock wrote extensive notes on each of the 24 pieces, which he then distributed to piano teachers at his numerous workshops. Covering everything from interpretational ideas to performance practices, these notes offer unparalleled insight into the composer’s process. They are published for the first time in this edition,¹ and provide invaluable assistance to both students and teachers in tackling the myriad of musical and technical challenges contained in the music. The notes anticipate changes to be made for the revised edition, most of which are reflected in this book; however, for unknown reasons, a number of the passages in question were left unaltered. Considering how closely Gillock worked with the editor on the revised edition, it may be reasonably assumed that he consciously chose to leave out these changes. This new edition remains faithful to the 1991 revision.



Performance Notes by William L. Gillock

Forest Murmurs (p. 8) does not express a profound emotional experience. The mood is one of warm contentment with just a hint of regret (measures 13–15) that all good things must eventually come to an end. This feeling is best expressed by holding back slightly, while playing with a bit more expression.

Technically, the first consideration is maintaining the three levels of sound required throughout. The melody notes played with the outside fingers of the right-hand will need the most weight; the thumb and second finger trill pattern (the “murmur”) is played *sotto voce*. The left-hand, though soft, provides harmonic support. Touches and phrasing are important.

Seascape (p. 10) is a picture of agitated, storm-tossed waves, starting with a subdued but menacing sound in the first two lines and growing more and more dramatic in measures

¹ The composer’s notes are printed courtesy of Henry Doskey.



Forest Murmurs

Gently (♩ = ca. 88–92)

Measures 1-3 of the piece. The right hand features a melody with a slur over measures 1 and 2, and a fermata over measure 3. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords. The dynamic is *mp*. A bracket below the staff indicates "soft pedal throughout".

Measures 4-6 of the piece. Measure 4 is marked with a box containing the number 4. The right hand has a slur over measures 4 and 5, and a fermata over measure 6. The left hand has a slur over measures 4 and 5. The dynamic is *cresc.*. A bracket below the staff indicates "soft pedal throughout".

Measures 7-9 of the piece. Measure 7 is marked with a box containing the number 7. The right hand has a slur over measures 7 and 8, and a fermata over measure 9. The left hand has a slur over measures 7 and 8. The dynamic is *pp*. A bracket below the staff indicates "soft pedal throughout".

Measures 10-12 of the piece. Measure 10 is marked with a box containing the number 10. The right hand has a slur over measures 10 and 11, and a fermata over measure 12. The left hand has a slur over measures 10 and 11. The dynamic is *pp*. A bracket below the staff indicates "soft pedal throughout".



Procession of the Mandarin

With a slow, swaying motion (♩ = ca. 56)

gently disconnected



Soaring

In a romantically intense manner (♩ = ca. 104–112)

System 1: Piano introduction. Melody in the right hand, bass line in the left hand. Dynamics: *mf*.

System 2: Melody continues. Dynamics: *decresc. un poco*.

System 3: Melody continues. Dynamics: *mf*. Includes instruction: *8va--*.

System 4: Melody continues. Dynamics: *cresc.*.

System 5: Melody continues. Dynamics: *f*. Includes instruction: *riten.*.

System 6: Melody continues. Dynamics: *decresc.*.