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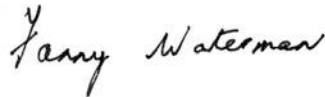
Preface

Many years ago I was invited by the Royal Society of Arts in London to give the Tolansky Memorial Lecture, and chose as my subject the preparation of the young pianist for the concert platform. The first edition of this book grew out of that lecture, stimulated in particular by a series of piano master-class programmes – entitled *Piano Progress* – which I was commissioned to prepare for screening on Channel 4. That manuscript would not have gone to press without the invaluable help of my husband Geoffrey de Keyser, and publisher, Martin Kingsbury.

This second edition has been updated to reflect the experiences I have had over the last twenty years since the book was first published, and includes further thoughts and words of advice for all musicians. Many people have invited me in recent times to talk about the world of competitions, to which I have devoted a great deal of my professional life, and the book has therefore also been expanded to include a chapter on this subject. A new appendix includes some of the thought-provoking and often inspiring *Rules and Maxims for Young Pianists* of Robert Schumann, many of which, although written nearly two hundred years ago, are still startlingly fresh and relevant for today's musicians.

Of all professions, I regard teaching to be the most important. One cannot become a doctor, lawyer, engineer, chef or joiner without someone to guide and inspire us. Teachers have tremendous influence over our lives from our earliest days. This chain of influence is infinite.

This book is dedicated to Geoffrey, who was my rock and inspiration for fifty-seven years, with love and gratitude.



DAME FANNY WATERMAN DBE
November 2005

Introduction

In 1943 a ‘brilliantly gifted pianist and musician’ left the Royal College of Music, London, after studying with Tobias Matthay and Cyril Smith, two of the finest teachers of the day. That student had won most of the important awards for pianists at the College and, at the end of her time there, was invited to play at a Promenade Concert with Sir Henry Wood and the BBC Symphony Orchestra. What more auspicious beginning to a career as a concert pianist could there be?

Let me confess that I was that young pianist. As with so many young artists – the majority perhaps – things did not turn out quite as I had expected. I found my vocation was teaching – my true vocation, that is, and not just second best to performing (perhaps fulfilling Cyril Smith’s prophecy that I ‘would be an inspiration to [my] pupils’). I then began to ask myself how I could draw on my experience as a performer-pianist to benefit others and to help them meet the challenges to be faced in the art of piano playing and performance.

The three aspects of musical training which I believe to be of paramount importance are: learning to be a craftsman, learning to be a musician, and becoming an artist.

The first and most important step in becoming a fine pianist is to learn the *CRAFT*; that is, to master every technical aspect of piano playing by learning *how*: how to play a scale at speed with each note of equal brilliance or pearly delicacy (as in Mozart’s Sonatas); how to play trills and repeated notes dynamically controlled to suit the mood of the music (as in Beethoven); how to develop a wrist staccato resembling the vertical action of a piston; how to master the art of tone production and pedalling (the perpetual challenge of how to make the piano sing, demanded by all composers, especially Schubert, Schumann and Chopin); how to achieve powerful octaves (Liszt), accurate skips and perfect co-ordination between the hands; how to balance parts when playing more than one