"A good pianist is always learning and exploring. It helps to know as much as possible about the pieces you're playing."

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"These capture the expressive mood of two of the pieces in the unit on character."

Mary Evans/John Massey Stewart Collection.

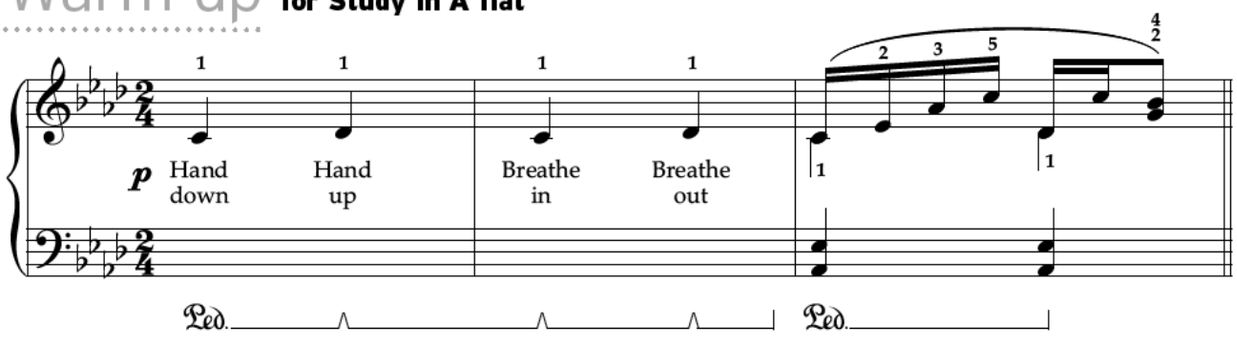
unit 4

Phrasing and rubato

Message from Lang Lang

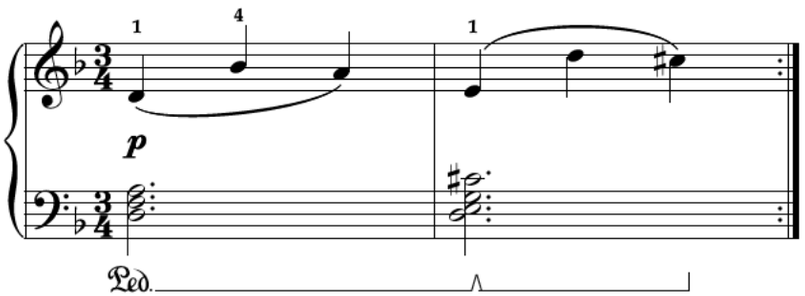
In conversations we are always using phrasing, emphasis and rubato-like hesitations to underline the sense. Exactly the same needs to happen when we play. Flexibility and changes in tone can make all the difference between a warm, musical performance and a meaningless string of notes.

Warm up **for Study in A flat**



- This focuses on the right-hand held thumb notes within the melody.
- Let your hand float up and down and breathe with the phrase.

Warm up **for Nocturne in D minor**



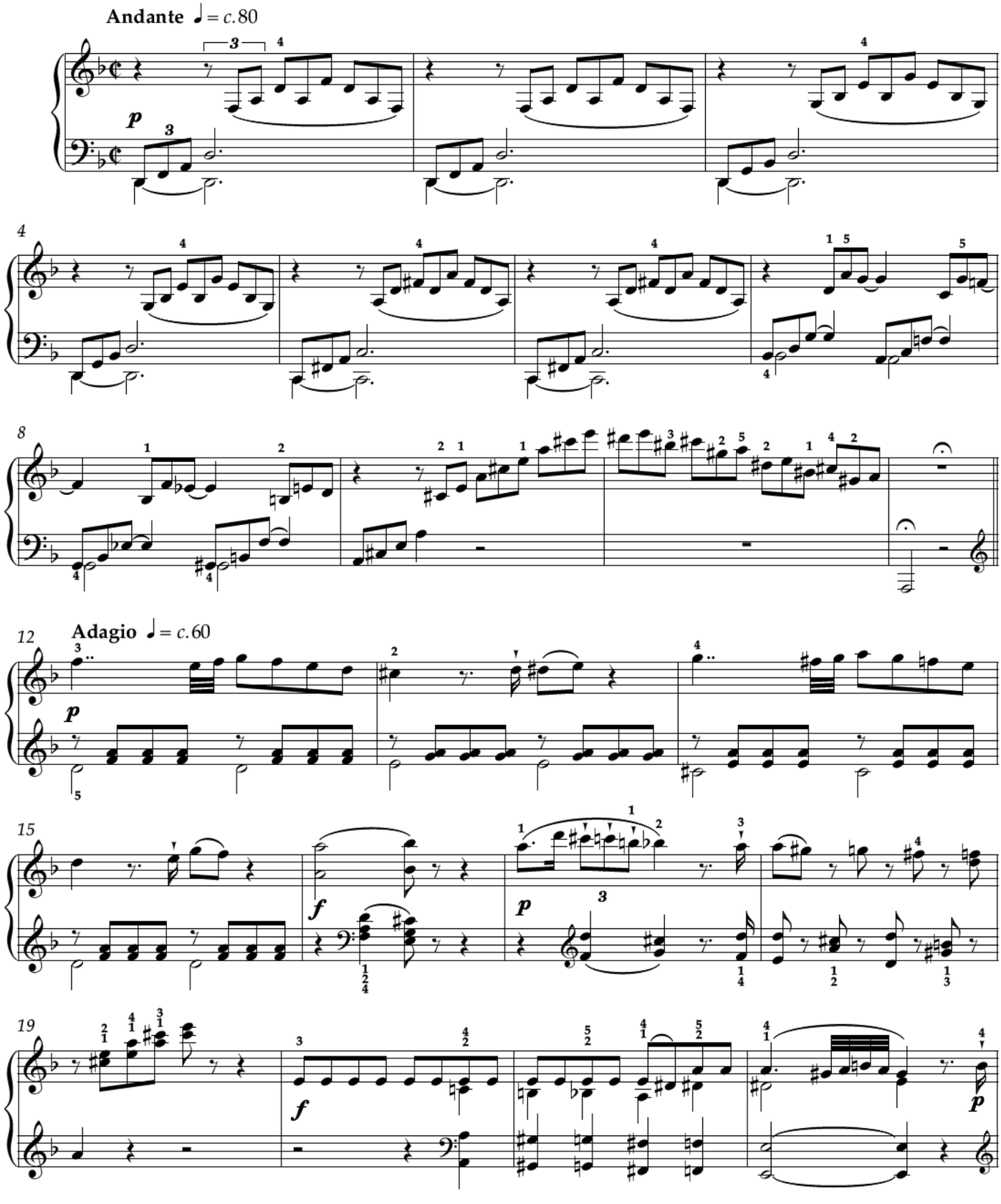
- Play these notes with a really cantabile touch.
- These are important notes within the opening melody of the Field Nocturne that need a special tone.

Try this!

- Play one of these pieces in strict time and with no expression. How does it sound? Then play it with the phrasing, rubato and feelings you have worked on and hear the difference!

unit 8

Fantasia in D minor

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
K.397

It's time to show off what you've learnt so far: you'll need all the skills I've shown you in this book to play Mozart's amazing Fantasia. The music should sound almost improvised, with no hint of the preparation required.