

## DAWN'S DAWNINGS- Part III

Just a few reminders that are new for PPMTA's 2019 Competitive Sonatina Festival:

1. Evaluation only is offered for piano students at time of registration. In Primer through Class IV a student may opt to have only 2 movements memorized.
2. It is important that teachers use the piano Sonatina list from the 2018-19 Handbook. Classifications at the top of each page are listed according to ages of students. Hopefully this is more "student friendly."

In Part II of "DAWN'S DAWNINGS" I mentioned the value of student's giving creative title's to different parts of the sonatina. I have always enjoyed teaching "Woodland Sonatina" by Robert D. Vandall. Seems a student always develops technical skills from all those perfect fifths in the first two movements. Recently the imaginative titles one sixth grade girl gave to the exposition, "frolicking squirrels" and the development, "bears hibernating" just gave life to the way she played that first movement. I was thrilled!

One of our very own PPMTA teachers, Chee-Hwa Tan captivates this in her "Circus Sonatina" and "Big-Top Sonatina" which I have enjoyed teaching over the years. These sonatinas are published through Piano Safari and are available through their website. They also offer a special on her 4 books, including her new one. <https://pianosafari.com/product-category/featured/>

In her introduction entitled, "Circus Secrets" she says "The sonatina form is explored via the imagery of the circus. It is my hope that this will allow students to use their imagination in expressing the contrasting musical themes that occur in the sonatina....."

In the older copy of these two Sonatinas in one booklet that I own, there is art work of the circus animals and people, descriptive tempo indication like, "With daring grace" or phrases written into the music like "with happy relief...". Should we too be using our imagination as teachers? Try writing such vivid emotional ideas! Now there is a thought!

At the end of the booklet is a section entitled "For the Teacher: Musical and Technical Concepts."

Should you just be getting started introducing sonatinas, this page has so much for introducing the harmonic form of the sonatina not to mention clarity for the technical development offered in each movement.

1. **I've taken the time to zero in on these Circus Sonatinas as a wonderful example to us as teachers to not miss the excitement of talking about the key of each movement and the primary chords.** It is easy to miss the connection between scales, primary chords, cadences that can seem so mechanical, (Oops! dare I say that?) and the exciting and fun piece of music. Could it be that you have a student who loves hearing about the harmonic structure of the sonatina? This knowledge also helps them know the piece even better memory wise.
2. **Holidays, family time, are wonderful times to begin to share the first two movements of the sonatina your student has diligently been working on.** Don't wait until March 2, 2019 to share these wonderful sonatinas. Keep playing games with those young students, retrieving parts!