

## **About fingering**

### **Dr. Christodoulos Vassiliades**

Fingering, in my opinion, is one of the biggest chapters in piano learning as well as in piano performance. Many piano teachers, unfortunately, don't take into consideration this chapter of music.

First of all, I believe that fingering must be placed in advance, from the beginning of the lesson, even before the students start learning a piece. This will help them place their fingers in the right position and perform the piece better.

Of course, someone cannot say that there is only one set of fingering. There are various fingerings and the teacher must choose, according to the student, the most suitable fingering for each case. The teacher can make the most appropriate choice of fingering depending on the student's hands.

When the students progress a bit in piano learning, the teacher can show them the finger staccato and wrist staccato. In finger staccato, the students can alternate fingers, such as 3, 2, 1, on the same note, whereas in wrist staccato the students can use the same finger, such as 1, 1, 1, for the same note. This will help them perform correctly the various staccato.

The correct fingerings help the piano student and the pianist to the correct interpretation of one piece. A performer cannot use wrong fingering and expect that (s)he will interpret a pianistic piece correctly. Yet the correct fingerings help the pianist apply correct technique. In music and especially in piano, one subject is related with the other thus we need to use correct fingering and correct technique in order to have correct interpretation.

Furthermore, when the students use correct fingerings in piano, this helps them not to have tension in performance. When the students have tension at the time that they perform a piece, this creates many physical problems that need special treatment in order to correct them.

To settle into the correct fingerings, you have to try them first on the piano many times and in the correct tempo. Others might be the fingerings that you will use when you perform a fast piece and others when you perform a slow piece.

Only when you learn a piece well and from memory, only then you can settle into the correct fingerings. Towards perfecting a piece, you can change many times the fingerings until you settle into the final and most correct ones.

As there is a harmonic or melodic sequence, so there is a sequence of fingerings. When we have various patterns, we can use the same fingerings, so as they will help us to interpret correctly and with the same way the melodic and harmonic patterns.

Finally, we would like to emphasize that the fingerings are not an end in itself, but a means that leads us towards the target, which is perfecting our piano performance.