

Studies in Song

New *Standards* for Piano

Ned Gerhart

standard edition
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Preface

A "standard" song is not so just because it is well-known and often-performed. This label also implies a certain common form as well. Standards are usually thirty-two bars long. These thirty-two bars typically have an "AABA" organization, containing four eight-bar phrases where the third section, or "bridge", is a contrasting interlude between repetitions of the main melody. Of course, much variation on this principle exists, and many books have been written about these structures within songs. The "AABA" form has been the predominant organizational device used for Broadway musical songs and jazz (other than the "blues" form) since the beginning of the twentieth century. Most of the pieces in this book have an "AABA" structure.

This book is the result of a hobby I stumbled on in 1990. The nice thing about creating something as a hobbyist is that you don't have to please anyone's taste besides your own. When one's own satisfaction with the result is all that matters, artistic development becomes like the evolution of life in the Galapagos Islands. Without exposure to the homogenizing effect which regular criticism or concerns for merchantability might produce, an artist who is an independent hobbyist, remote from cares beyond his own happiness, is arguably more inclined to develop an individual, eccentric style, at least if he continues to stay with it long enough. I have been doing my piano music thing alone in obscurity for sixteen years. Now that you have come upon my island, I hope you will be able to enjoy whatever special uniqueness I have managed to evolve.

I have tried to use as few instructions or dynamic markings as possible in the music. You are an artist too, and I know you have good taste. If you have not previously played jazz or popular music, the indication *swing-style 8th notes* means that 8ths should not be played with the usual 50/50 division per beat, they should be played more like 60/40 per beat. Can you dig it?

N.G.
July, 2006

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Candles in the Moonlight

This tune has been statistically the most popular item downloaded at www.nedgerhart.com. I think it is one of my best melodies too! It features an ordinary "AABA" form, but I am rather pleased with the way the first two sections are actually in different keys. Of course you will see that right off, but the shift is so subtle that I believe listeners hardly notice anything unusual happening.

The first system of musical notation is in 4/4 time with a tempo marking of quarter note = 84. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody in the treble clef begins with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The bass clef accompaniment starts with a quarter note G2, a quarter note B1, and a quarter note D2. Both staves feature several triplet markings over groups of three notes.

The second system of musical notation continues the piece. The treble clef staff features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with some chords. The bass clef staff provides a steady accompaniment with quarter notes and chords. The key signature changes to one flat (Bb) in this system.

The third system of musical notation continues the piece. The treble clef staff features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with some chords. The bass clef staff provides a steady accompaniment with quarter notes and chords. The key signature changes to two flats (Bb, Eb) in this system.

The fourth system of musical notation concludes the piece. The treble clef staff features a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with some chords. The bass clef staff provides a steady accompaniment with quarter notes and chords. The key signature changes to three flats (Bb, Eb, Ab) in this system.

First system of musical notation, consisting of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music features a melodic line in the treble and a bass line in the bass, with various chords and intervals.

Second system of musical notation, continuing the piece. It features a treble clef and a bass clef. The music includes a variety of chordal textures and melodic patterns.

Third system of musical notation, featuring a treble clef and a bass clef. This system includes several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' over a bracket) in both the treble and bass staves.

Fourth system of musical notation, consisting of a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The music continues with complex harmonic structures and melodic lines.

Fifth system of musical notation, the final system on the page. It features a treble clef and a bass clef. The word "rit." (ritardando) is written above the treble staff, with a wedge-shaped hairpin indicating a deceleration. The system concludes with a double bar line and a final chord in the bass.

October in Paris

Ah, October in Paris, chestnut leaves falling... This AABA-form tune is only 16 bars long because I chose to use 4/4 time rather than 2/2, which would have been the traditional choice. Before continuing after the sustained chord three measures from the end, I like to take a long, deep breath and feel the hair on my neck stand up a moment.

Wistfully, ♩ = 68

The first system of musical notation for 'October in Paris' consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, in 4/4 time. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Wistfully, ♩ = 68'. The melody in the treble clef begins with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note B-flat, and then a series of eighth and quarter notes. The bass clef accompaniment starts with a quarter rest, followed by a half note B-flat, and then a series of quarter notes.

The second system of musical notation continues the piece. The treble clef melody features a series of eighth and quarter notes, ending with a quarter rest. The bass clef accompaniment consists of quarter notes and chords, providing a steady harmonic foundation.

The third system of musical notation continues the piece. The treble clef melody features a series of eighth and quarter notes, ending with a quarter rest. The bass clef accompaniment consists of quarter notes and chords, providing a steady harmonic foundation.

The fourth system of musical notation concludes the piece. The treble clef melody features a series of eighth and quarter notes, ending with a quarter rest. The bass clef accompaniment consists of quarter notes and chords, providing a steady harmonic foundation.

First system of musical notation, consisting of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music features a melodic line in the treble and a supporting bass line in the bass.

Second system of musical notation, continuing the piece. It maintains the same key signature and clefs as the first system.

Third system of musical notation, continuing the piece. It maintains the same key signature and clefs as the first system.

Fourth system of musical notation, continuing the piece. It maintains the same key signature and clefs as the first system. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present in the second measure of the treble staff.

Fifth system of musical notation, concluding the piece. It maintains the same key signature and clefs as the first system. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) at the beginning and *rit.* (ritardando) in the second measure. The system ends with a double bar line.