

Red Leaf News

Piano music of Martha Hill Duncan, Beverly Porter, Susan Griesdale, Janet Gieck, Rebekah Maxner, Christine Donkin



Red Leaf Pianoworks

www.redleafpianoworks.com
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What's New at Red Leaf

Our Website

Come and check out our wide variety of music and resources on our updated website! You'll enjoy browsing our new catalogue, which now features score samples, sound samples, composers' descriptions of their work, and links to the composers' websites.

Three New Composers

Red Leaf Pianoworks now represents the work of six composers. Added to the original trio (Martha Hill Duncan, Beverly Porter, and Susan Griesdale) are newcomers Janet Gieck, Rebekah Maxner, and Christine Donkin. You can find out more about all the Red Leaf composers in the Bio section of the website.



Come and explore our new catalogue at www.redleafpianoworks.com

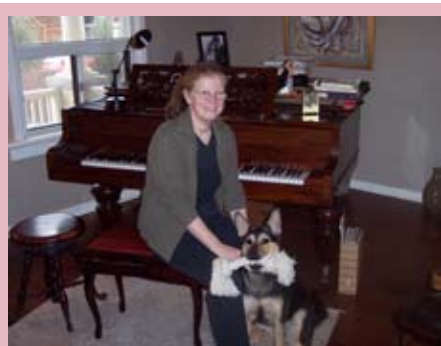
Interview with this issue's Featured Composer,

Susan Griesdale

- *Tell us about yourself – where you grew up, what your interests are, and so on.*

I was born in Montreal but also lived in Winnipeg, Vancouver and Toronto. I went to the University of Western Ontario in London Ontario to earn a BA. Being a very good student and a 'dutiful' daughter, I entered the world of retailing first and then the insurance business, where I worked for over twenty years! But it wasn't until I was in my thirties that I really followed my dreams. The company went under, I was let go and I was 'free'! I was so happy and excited, I think my co workers thought I was nuts! But I knew I would never work 9 to 5 again! While I worked in the office, I had been working to earn my ARCT (I would get up at 6 AM to practice two hours before going to work and then starting at 8 PM for three hours at night). So when rendered 'jobless', I was determined to make a living through music. I've never looked back!

Music was always in my life in some capacity. My mother taught piano at the Conservatory - the Dark Hall - in Regina, Saskatchewan in the thirties. It just seemed natural for me to make music part of my life. But I admit I always took my own
(continued on page 2)



Susan loves animals: here she is with Roxy.

Great teaching ideas

PEDAL TIP

With thicker textures, try pedaling with the right hand melody line rather than the left hand accompaniment for a more beautiful *cantabile* line and better clarity throughout.

PERFORMANCE TIP

When a student's performance is steady, but seems too vertical, try pulling across the barlines from the last beat to the first beat for a more horizontal flow.

Come and meet us...

We'd love to see you at the following events:

July 18-20, 2010

Summer Sizzle, Mt. Forest, Ontario

July 25-28, 2010

ORMTA Convention, London, Ontario

October 15-16, 2010

SRMTA Convention, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Now available...



Lady Bug and Friends

by Beverly Porter

Fanciful bugs are featured in this collection of ten solos and one duet. Levels range from elementary to intermediate, and there is a variety of rhythms, tempos and keys.



Hollyhocks

by Martha Hill Duncan

A quirky and showy jazz duet with strong syncopation, melody and equality through the parts. Works well for Grade 8/9 or strong Gr. 7 students.



Dances, Daydreams, & Dinosaurs

by Janet Gieck

Pieces to capture the imaginations of girls and boys - for the elementary piano student.

(Interview with Susan Griesdale - continued from page 1)
path, feeling quite driven to go a certain direction that was not necessarily the 'accepted path'. I remember getting a guitar for my 16th birthday. I felt so 'cool'! (Back then I would have said 'groovy'). I was just exploding with excitement. But rather than formal lessons, I just wanted to explore the sounds. So I would come up with these little 'ditties' and play them 'over and over and over and over...'ad nauseum'. I must have driven my family to distraction!

I also love art and especially drawing. It's always been a bit of a dream to do that professionally. These days with technology and graphic software, I've been able to 'play' and have had fun creating my publications with my drawings and also doing book covers for others.

Another big influence in my life was that, as a youth, I was a Highland Dancer. For those who don't know the effects of bagpipes, the sound rings in your ear for hours afterwards. I loved those microtonal sounds. It's been a big influence on my tonal vocabulary. My harmony teacher was so exasperated with me because I never really bought into the idea that dissonance needs resolving. Tierce de picardies drive ME to distraction!

♦ *Your compositions' titles are often very intriguing. Where do you come up with your ideas?*

I found that I loved teaching music because it allowed me a chance to 'be playful' again – with students of any age! I get inspired by all the personalities in my life and write pieces with specific students in mind. I admit I have the most fun when I'm writing something whimsical or wry. There is so much 'serious music' out there. It's much more fun and actually surprises students a bit when I explore and look for repertoire that exposes the humorous side of our human experience. So many of my compositions are designed with that in mind.

In the next issue...

- ♦ an interview with Martha Hill Duncan
- ♦ new products:

Piano collection (elementary/intermediate):

Old MacDonald Had the Blues (12 familiar tunes arranged in today's popular styles)

by Rebekah Maxner

Piano collection (advanced):

Peace Country

by Christine Donkin

Any questions?

If there's anything you'd like to know about us or about any of our products, ask at info@redleafpianoworks.com. Selected questions and answers will be included in the next newsletter.

- ♦ *Can you tell us a little about the piece that's included in this newsletter [on the next page]?*

Yes – it's a new little composition called *Spunk* that hasn't been published yet. I'm going to make it available here just so everyone can have some fun as well! That would indeed give me the greatest satisfaction! It's about the grade 8 level. Enjoy!

- ♦ *Do you have any advice for people playing/teaching your compositions?*

I know the music can look 'scary' because of all the accidentals. My advice is to look for the patterns. I purposely put in repeated patterns so that once it's known, a large percentage of the piece is learned. I also like other people's interpretations of my work. As long as it's convincing and captures the mood then I'm all for it! So you won't find my scores to be overly detailed with dynamics, articulation markings etc. If they are indicated then I do want them, but if there is nothing then I'm open to different 'renditions'. ♦

Find more of Susan's music at www.redleafpianoworks.com: *Little Hands, Big Pieces; Piano Mime; Let's Pretend; Go Merry Round!; Rhythm Band; The Threesome Blues; Three to Tango; Latin Tracks; Cool Cat*; and more!

Inspiring words...

"If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in."

– Rachel Carson

"Each child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up."

– Pablo Picasso

'Spunk'

a little scherzo

Susan Griesdale

'Fun and Frisky!' Allegretto $\text{♩} = 86$

Piano

p *mp*

This system contains the first four measures of the piece. The piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in the left hand and chords in the right hand. The right hand has a melodic line starting in measure 3. Dynamics are marked *p* (piano) and *mp* (mezzo-piano).

5

8va

This system contains measures 5 through 8. The right hand has a melodic line with a slur over measures 5-6 and a *8va* (octave) marking above measure 7. The piano accompaniment continues with eighth notes and chords.

9

This system contains measures 9 through 12. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs over measures 9-10 and 11-12. The piano accompaniment continues with eighth notes and chords.

13

p *mf*

This system contains measures 13 through 16. Measure 13 has a slur over the right hand. A crescendo hairpin is shown in the piano part between measures 14 and 15. Dynamics are marked *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

'Spunk' - a little Scherzo

18 *8va*

22

26 *8va*

30 *(8va)*