

Repertoire Guide:
Legends for flute and piano
by Valerie Coleman

Exercises and commentary by
Jessica Banks

Introduction:

This repertoire guide is designed to help students learn this piece with or without access to a private flute teacher. As always, instruction from a private teacher who specializes in your instrument can never be replaced, but this resource will hopefully help more flutists discover this great work! Additionally, I hope that this guide will also help teachers and performers find new teaching/practice ideas.

Music can be purchased at colemanpagemusic.com

Piece background:

Originally written for Gordon Cole and the Kentucky Flute Society this piece showcases four different legends from around the world. Each movement combines the unique musical characteristics from each legend's culture with Coleman's own compositional style. While the piece was written with the intention of being accessible to intermediate level flutists, advanced and professional flutists will also enjoy programming it. The descriptions below for each movement¹ should inform your musical interpretation through your choice of: tone color, articulation, tempo, dynamics, vibrato, and more.

Exercises:

For each movement I have created warmup exercises that will help performers work on various techniques needed to perform the piece. These exercises are available in a more compact version at the end of the document.

¹ Program notes written using material from Alicia Kosack presentation for the 2022 Mid Atlantic Flute Convention-
"Broadening Our Horizons: Music to Diversify Your Repertoire"

I. Lin-Fa (The Lotus Lilly)

Legend: Rooted in mud, the lotus lily emerges from the water. They submerge and close each night then reawaken above the water every morning. Their meaning varies from culture to culture, commonly representing purity, rebirth, strength, and transcendence. In Chinese Buddhist culture the lotus flower symbolizes the ability to go through ugliness in life and yet remain pure.

Warm up exercises:

Tone study: This warmup will help you work on getting into the low register with a strong, resonant tone while working in the key of the piece.



Goal: Make sure to keep the tone full and focused as you descend. Repeat each measure and try to improve the tone on the repetition. If the tone gets unfocused, back up to the previous note or measure to find a note with more focused tone and try to bring it through to the next pitch.

NOTE: pay special attention to the D-flat and C's! Make sure to not push extra air on these notes, but instead shape the oral cavity into a more "errrr" (as in her) shape to control the tone.

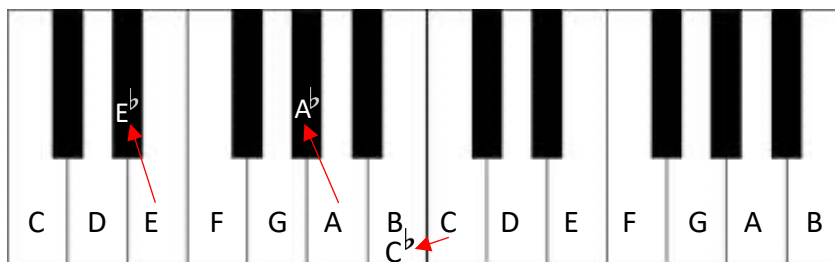
Arpeggio exercise: The goal of this exercise is to create a smooth line while playing across a wider range of pitches.



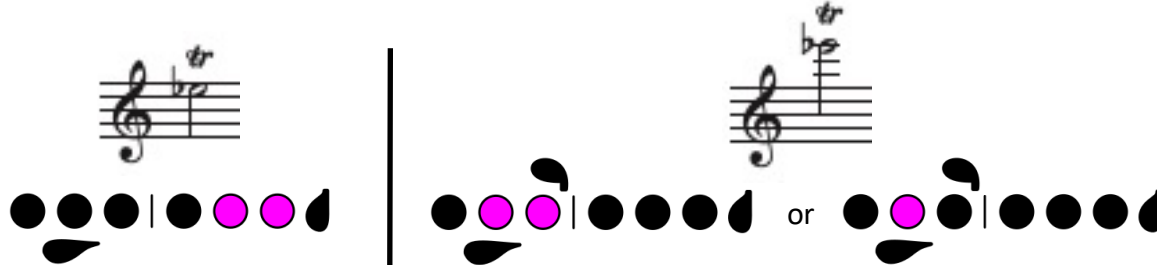
Notes for students:

C-flat is fingered the same as B-natural.

Explanation: The piano below shows 3 examples of notes with their "flat version". As you can see, a flat note is the next closest note from the main letter name. In most cases it goes to a black key, but occasionally a white key is the next closest key which is why C-flat is the same as B-natural.



Trills are performed by first fingering the note that is written and then trilling the keys in pink below.



Note: for this trill you need to put the 1st finger down for the E-flat.

Note: use the fingering that is easiest for you!

(Diagrams created using [Fingering Diagram Builder](http://fingering.bretpimentel.com) at fingering.bretpimentel.com)

Performance tips:

- Staccato notes should be separated, but not short or pecked out. Think of them as a light note followed by one with more weight.
- Grace notes should not be played as fast as possible, but rather relaxed and gentle in a singing style.
- Be sure to pull the air through each of the notes under the slurs. Weave the air through each note so they make perfect connections in between the notes. This is especially true in the arpeggiated passages, i.e. m. 15-17
- The rhythms should never feel rushed. This can be difficult on the 16th and 32nd note rhythms, so be sure to play them accurately in a relaxed style.
- Take a full breath before m. 35 so you can sing out and really enjoy this beautiful moment in the music. To avoid going sharp in this passage make space in the mouth and between the lips to allow for maximum resonance.

Tips to prepare for collaborating with a pianist:

- Rhythmic breathing: The piano starts with you in the beginning. To coordinate this entrance, I suggest thinking "1. 2. 3, breathe". Giving yourself a full bar before starting can help you establish the tempo, take a full breath, and most importantly take a rhythmic breath! Breathing "in rhythm" is so important for easy collaboration with other musicians.
- In measure 4, be consistent with your release on beat 2 so the pianist can match you.
- Be sure to hold out your long notes accurately and listen to the piano part. During many of the flute's long notes, there are 16th note fills in the piano part so you don't want to miss those by rushing the long notes.
- In 7 from the end, the piano has half notes which are a fairly big change compared to the more active rhythms throughout the rest of the movement. Just be prepared for this change and take your time through this moment.

- In 6 from the end the piano has the downbeat with a syncopated rhythm. For the flutist, it can be helpful to listen for a two eighth note rhythm here before entering on beat 2.
- Even though you might not need it, I recommend taking a breath before 4 bars from the end. This will help you reset the dynamic, embouchure, and be together with the pianist.
- Make sure you hold the last note until after the piano plays the final chord and you let the harmony settle.

II. Dagda's Harp

Legend: The Dagda is a god in Irish mythology, portrayed as a father-figure, king, and druid. He is associated with fertility, agriculture, masculinity, and strength, as well as magic, druidry, and wisdom. He wields three sacred treasures: a cauldron of plenty, a club of life and death, and a harp that controls man and the seasons.

Warmup Exercises:

“Groove” exercises: The following two exercises will help you gain confidence in performing passages that obscure the written meter in a technique called hemiola. The corresponding passages in the piece are examples of hemiolas because they make the music feel like it is in a different meter. For example, in the second bar at A the groupings of the notes make it sound/feel like it is in $\frac{3}{4}$ not $\frac{6}{8}$. The goal is to play the exercises rhythmically accurate while also developing a feel for the underlying groove in the hemiola.

Note: Practice keeping the dotted quarter note pulse and then try shifting to a quarter note pulse to feel the hemiola. You can use a metronome set at the eighth note tempo to help you maintain the pulse when switching between meters ($\frac{6}{8}$ feel and $\frac{3}{4}$ feel). Repeat each exercise until the groove starts to feel natural.

a.



b.



High register exercise: The goal of this exercise is to work into the extremes of the high register while keeping an open aperture so that the final note of the movement sings out. If you are struggling to get a sound out on the high B, first focus on getting a great sound on the notes up to high G. Then after a week or so of work try to go up to the high A, and finally try the high B again.

Use fermata note to find your most resonant tone

Try to get back to the same resonant tone

Performance tips:

- Grace notes are usually performed relative to the tempo. Since this movement is at a faster tempo, these grace notes will be faster than those in the first movement.
- Be sure to keep a dance-like quality throughout by maintaining a strong sense of the pulse.
- Each beat (dotted quarter) should be played in a lilting style- where the weight or emphasis is on the first part of each beat and then releases.
- The accents at B-C can be played with a little more emphasis than the other accents in the piece to fit the change in character of this section.

Tips to prepare for collaborating with a pianist:

- Be sure to take a rhythmic breath at the beginning so you can help set the tempo with the pianist.
- The piano has the melody at B so you need to listen carefully to fit in the flute's countermelody accompaniment with rhythmic accuracy.
- In the 2nd & 6th bars of B as well as the 3rd bar of C the flute part works with the piano to create the hemiola making it sound like it's in $\frac{3}{4}$. Listening to the piano part and exaggerating the accents can help make this effect come out even more.

III. Gaia

Legend: In Greek mythology, Gaia is the personification of the Earth and the great mother of all creation. Everything from the stars to mountains and great oceans was born from Gaia.

Warm-up exercises:

Articulation/Release exercise: The goal of this exercise is to work on gentle releases from the slur without clipping. Work on not accenting or clipping the top note in the group of three slurred notes. You can also choose to put a little bit of weight on the first note of the slur as part of your interpretation.



Wide Interval exercise: Keep lips open and flexible! If the lips can't easily move it will be very difficult to get these wider intervals to speak without cracking the lower notes.



Performance tips:

- The tempo should never feel rushed in this movement, but especially in the opening. Enjoy each note and stay on the back of the beat.
- Smooth musical lines with lots of strong connections in the slurred groups are needed in this movement. Use a steady airstream and smooth finger motions when moving between slurred notes.
- Be sure to note all the dynamic changes and bring out the climaxes in m. 13, 21, and 29-32 by starting the phrase at a lower dynamic as marked and then open the aperture as you get louder.

Tips to prepare for collaborating with a pianist:

- At m. 24 the piano part begins playing 16th notes. Work to align the 16ths in the flute part with the piano's line.
- There are quite a few important moments where the flute and piano need to pay extra attention to be together starting 9 from the end. Looking at the piano score can be helpful to see how the parts fit together. For example, in 8 & 9 from the end the flute and piano are together on beat 4. Then in 6 from the end both parts articulate a note on the & of beat 2.

IV. El Encierro (The running of the bulls)

Legend: The Running of the Bulls – The most famous bull-run is the encierro held in Pamplona during the festival of San Fermin. Originally rooted in practical origins, it was typically used by cattle herders to guide bulls from ships to the countryside, bullrings, or markets to be sold. Eventually the townspeople began to join the run as a feat of bravery.

Warmup exercise:

Articulation Hemiola exercise: Use this exercise to work on the feel of the eighth notes in a 6/8 vs. 3/4 pattern. Adding accents on the beats can also help in feeling the larger pulse and bringing out the spirited lilt of the movement.



Performance tips:

- Try to practice with a metronome set at the eighth note tempo without accents on the beats. This will allow the performer to choose which grouping they want to feel in a given measure (3/4 or 6/8)
- Practicing this movement from the piano part will allow you to see when the piano implies a 3/4 meter. You can easily identify this by looking for measures with three quarter notes in the bass clef line.
- For example, you could then count the rhythm in the flute part as such using compound counting (1 la li 2 la li) for the true 6/8 bars and simple counting (1 & 2 & 3 &) for the implied 3/4 bars:

(1) 2 ta la ta li ta 1 & 2 & 3 (1) la li 2 la li 1 2 &(3) &

- This movement should sound fun and light throughout. Using clear articulations and playing the dynamics as written will help bring out this character in the music.

Tips to prepare for collaborating with a pianist:

- The most challenging aspect of performing this piece with piano is the hemiola effect implying a $\frac{3}{4}$ meter in the piano part while the flute part stays in $\frac{6}{8}$.
- While the flute part is written entirely in a $\frac{6}{8}$ meter, the piano part implies $\frac{3}{4}$ on and off throughout the piece. Learning the piece with these shifts in the feel of the meter can help bring out these changes as well as make collaboration more cohesive.
- You can practice performing with the piano part using this accompaniment track: <https://youtu.be/NxZogPUirvc>

Exercises for performance

I. Lin-Fa

Tone study: This warmup will help you work on getting into the low register with a strong, resonant tone while working in the key of the piece.



Arpeggio exercise: The goal of this exercise is to create a smooth line while playing across a wider range of pitches.



II. Dagda's Harp

High register exercise: The goal of this exercise is to work into the extremes of the high register while keeping an open aperture so that the final note of the movement sings out. If you are struggling to get a sound out on the high B, first focus on getting a great sound on the notes up to high G. Then after a week or so of work try to go up to the high A, and finally try the high B again.

Use fermata note to find your most resonant tone

Try to get back to the same resonant tone

Three staves of music in 3/4 time, key of D major. The exercise consists of three measures, each containing a descending eighth-note arpeggio. The notes in each measure are: G4-A4-B4, F#4-G4-A4, and E4-F#4-G4. Each measure ends with a fermata on the final note. Blue arrows point from the text above to the first and second fermata notes.

“Groove” exercises: The following two exercises will help you gain confidence in performing these passages that obscure the written meter.



III. Gaia

Articulation/Release exercise: The goal of this exercise is to work on gentle releases from the slur without clipping.



Wide Interval exercise: Keep lips open and flexible! If the lips can't easily move it will be difficult to get these wider intervals to speak without cracking the note.



IV. El Encierro

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