NEIGHBORHOOD MUSIC SCHOOL
presents

THE 2020
RENÉE B. FISHER PIANO
COMPETITION

Choro
by William Minter

ELEMENTARY / MIDDLE SCHOOL
DIVISION WORK
Commissioned by the Renée B. Fisher Foundation

The FISHER Competition
William Minter biography

I am a composer, teacher, video producer, and author. Originally from the UK, I now live in Connecticut with my wife and daughter.

My compositions are a celebration of my musical interests and influences, which include classical music, jazz, and traditional music from around the world. My music is typically tonal; it often incorporates jazz harmony and syncopation, and usually has a very clear structure. I write mostly for piano, but I have also written for string orchestra, recorder ensemble, and guitar.


Choro performance notes

Choro is a genre of Brazilian music which developed in a similar way to ragtime at the turn of the 20th century. It is a syncopated, virtuosic, jazzy genre which is usually played in small groups. The piano is not commonly used in choro; this piece of music uses the piano to imitate typical choro instruments: flute, guitar, cavaquinho (like a ukulele) and pandeiro (like a tambourine). As you play the piece, imagine these instruments playing together; try to play as if you are a whole band. To get a good feel of Choro, listen to recordings by Jacob do Bandolim or Pixinguinha.

The Choro sound

Underlying the choro sound is a consistent pattern of strong and weak beats. Each bar can be divided up into 8 16th notes. Like in ragtime, the off-beats are more accented than the on-beats. In particular, the first beat of the bar is not accented, and the 2nd and 5th 16th notes are accented. Phrases typically begin on the 2nd or 5th 16th note in the bar:

![Choro notation]

Small hands

This piece contains octave melodies and chords in the right hand part. For hands that can’t reach a whole octave, the lowest note of the chord should be either omitted, or if possible, taken in the left hand. The lowest note can also be omitted for the chord in bar 83. If the chords in bars 84 and 85 are too large, they should be rolled.