

More About UNMEASURED PRELUDES

There are many types of short compositions for piano and other keyboard instruments that are called “preludes.” The one commonality is that they typically come in sets, but the bottom line is you can call just about any short solo composition a “prelude” and get away with it.

To find a title for this set of 6 miniatures, I went all the way back to the early Baroque period, when “unmeasured preludes” were pieces that gave the performer complete freedom to decide on the duration of each note, often with little or no rhythmic notation. While mine do have the rhythms and hand-alignment notated, there are no barlines and no meter, so the performer still has a great deal of flexibility in deciding how to interpret what I have given him/her.

To offer the most freedom of expression, I probably shouldn't have, but I did provide general tempo indications:

- 1. Slow, sustained**
- 2. Restless**
- 3. Gently**
- 4. Solemn**
- 5. Rather quickly**
- 6. Very slow, sustained**

Technically, these pieces run from grade 2 through 4+, but with no barlines and mostly vague tempo indications, pulling them off requires a fairly mature level of musicianship. Pedaling is suggested on the score, but does not have to be followed exactly as marked.

In retrospect, I am sure I could have come up with something more original for a title, but what's done is done...so this is my humble contribution to the vast literature of piano preludes.