The MAYRON COLE PIANO METHOD



# Some Fun Using Parallel Minor Scales!

## A note from the composer:

Many of you are being asked to play the piano for weddings and church services. That's the joy of being an accomplished pianist — using your talents in community service! When playing for a ceremony or service, one of the fun things I like to do is to move to the parallel minor scale. Here's how it works: play the composition as written; then, play the composition using the parallel minor scale. The *notes* remain the same; you simply change the *key signature* in your mind. Use the harmonic minor scale which means the 7th note of the scale is raised. After a few measures of playing in the harmonic minor scale, change back to the major key in which the composition is written. Use your own good ear to decide when to change back and forth. On the next two pages is a small composition in G Major. I have written it a second time using the same notation as G Major but changing to G minor using the key signature of two flats plus F♯.

Mayron Cole

Below, write the G Major scale. What is its key signature?_____(1 flat or 1 sharp)

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Below, write the G harmonic minor scale. What is its key signature? _____(2 sharps or 2 flats?)

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____



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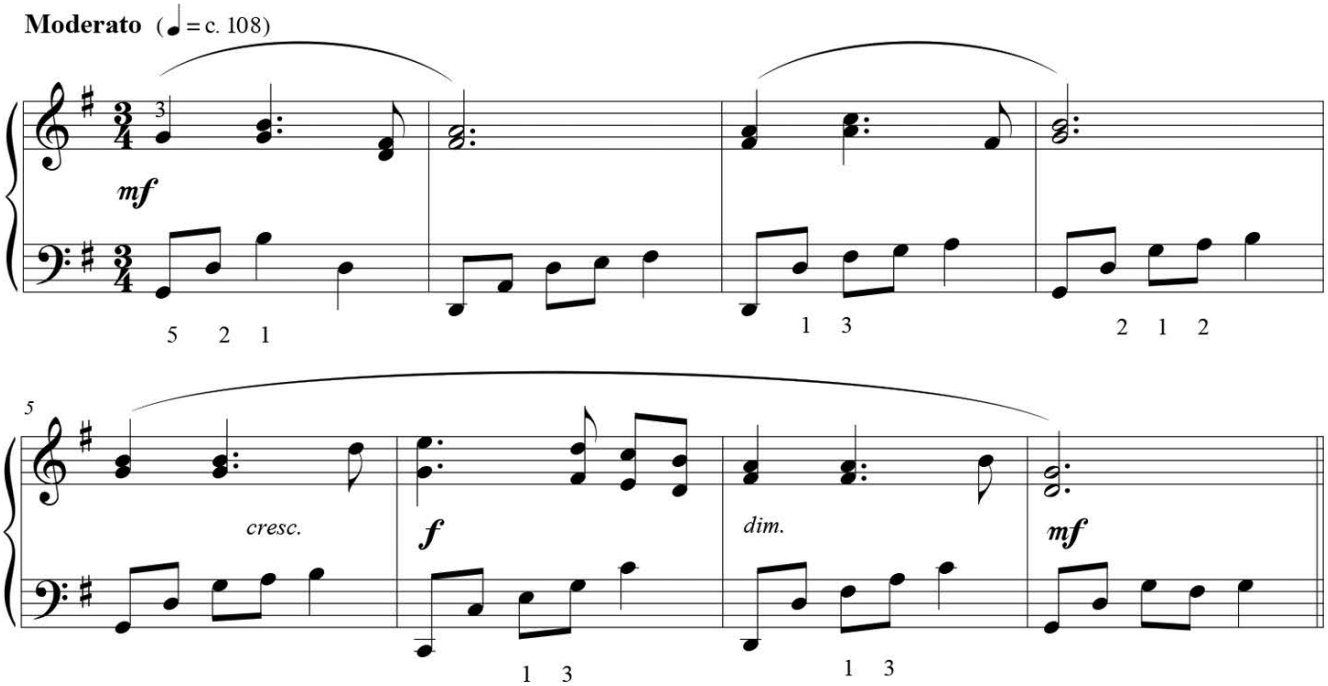
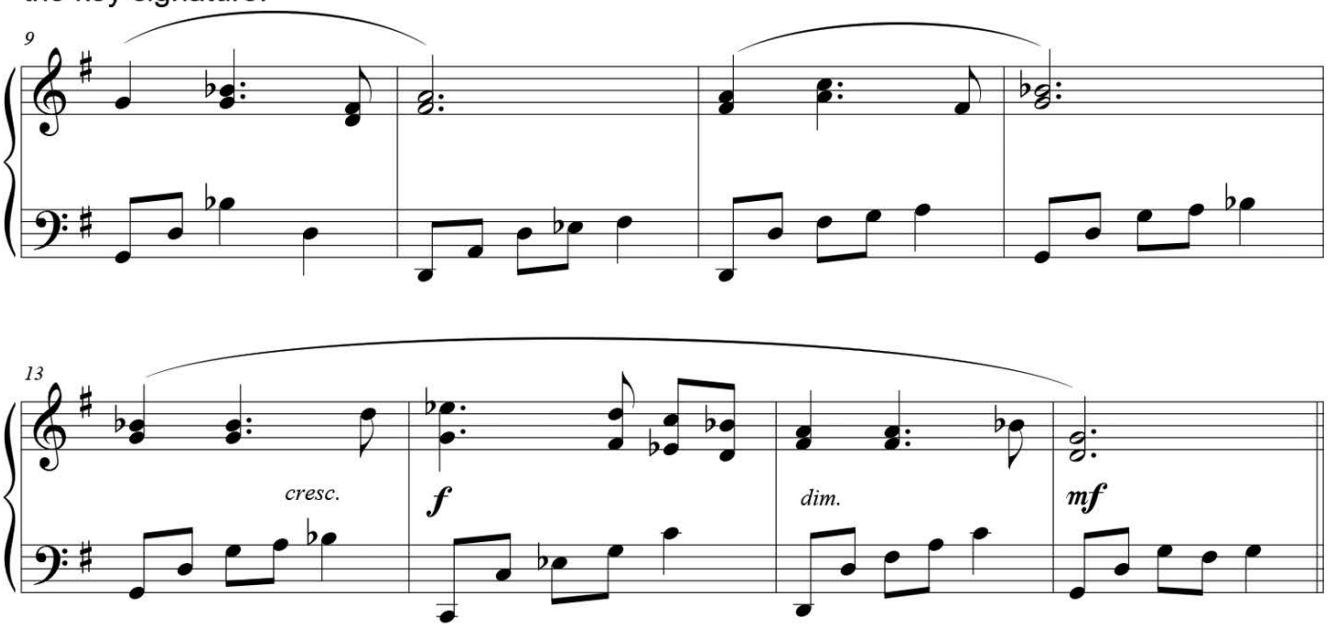
# Wandering Around in G Major and G Minor

Mayron Cole

The following eight measures have been written in G Major. Play them as written:




Below is the same notation that you see above, but the parallel harmonic minor scale is used. This means to flat B and E, and sharp F. Since this is your first time to try this musical "trick" the composer has placed the flat signs where needed; the "F" remains sharped from the key signature:



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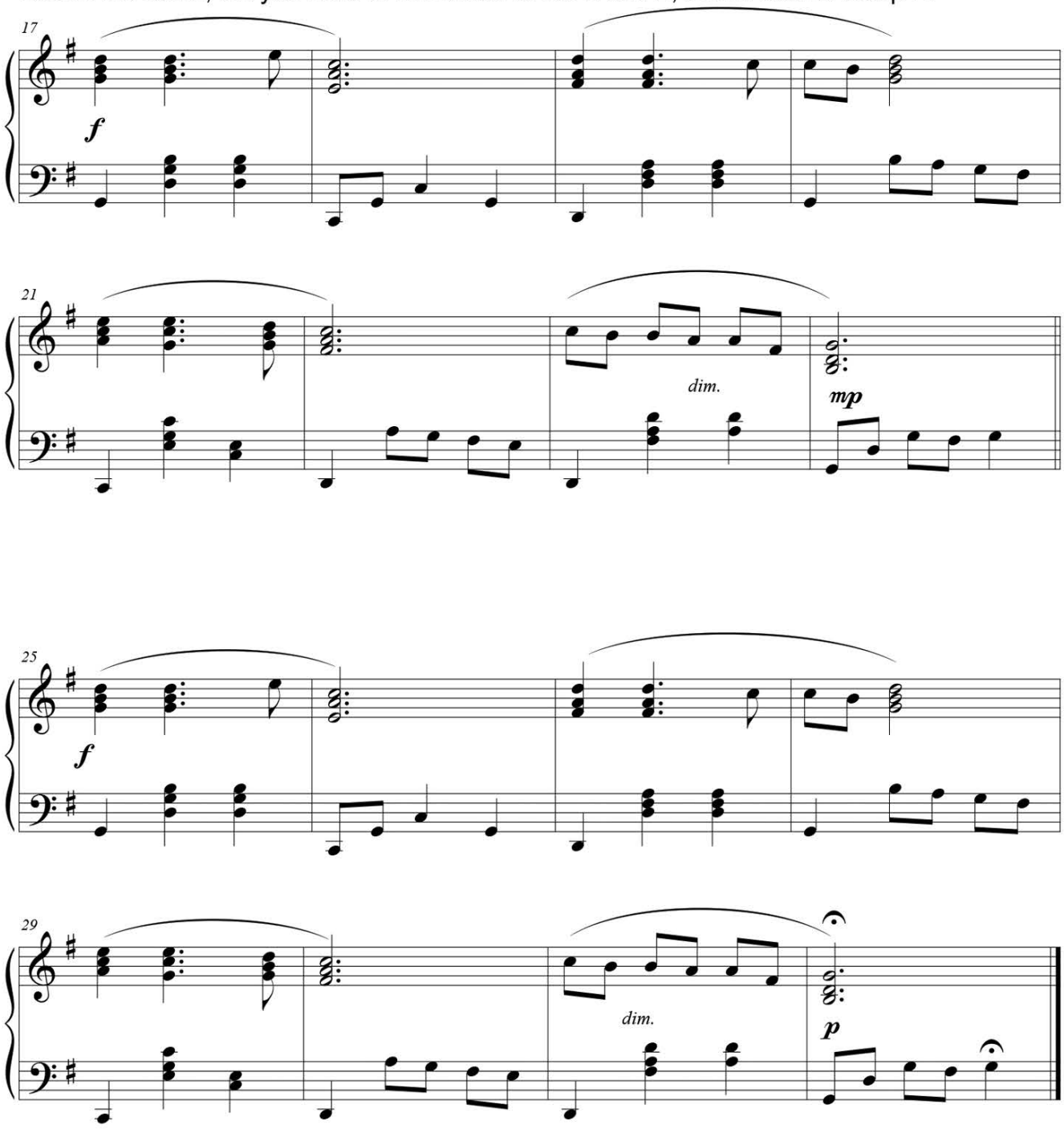
Now try it on your own. Play the first eight measures on this page in G Major (as written), then play the last eight measures using the parallel harmonic minor scale. The notation will remain the same, but you have to remember to flat B and E, and of course sharp F:





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# Music History

## A Guide to Western Composers and Their Music From the Middle Ages to the Present

### The Middle Ages

When the Roman Empire collapsed in the fifth century, Europe entered a period referred to as The Dark Ages or The Middle Ages. For nine hundred years, invading hordes overran Europe and there was constant warfare. Then the Christian Church slowly began to dominate the culture. Pope Gregory's Gregorian Chants were the approved music of the Church during that time. Secular music was performed throughout Europe by wandering French troubadours. It was during The Middle Ages that the first great name in music appeared: Guillaume de Machau.



*Château de Vincennes, France late 1100s*



*The Small Cowper Madonna completed in 1505*

### The Renaissance

The word Renaissance literally means "rebirth" and was generally from 1420 to 1600. There was great cultural awakening throughout Europe. The arts, letters and sciences flourished. Sacred music began to break free of the Church's confines. Secular music was in abundance. Josquin des Prez and Giovanni da Palestrina were two composers of importance during this era.



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## The Baroque Age



*French Corner Cupboard and Clock*

The Baroque period was roughly between 1600 and 1750. "Baroque" literally means "misshaped pearl" but the term has come to mean the extremely ornate architectural style of the time. This was a time when the many monarchs of Europe tried to outdo each other in pomp and pageantry. Many royals employed composers to churn out music for any desired occasion. The greatest composer of this period was Johann Sebastian Bach. It was during this time that composers were trying to break new musical ground. Many compositions from The Baroque Age have flourishes and ornamentations which "dress up" the music notation. Some other famous composers of The Baroque Age are Antonio Vivaldi, Domenico Scarlatti, and George Frideric Handel.

## The Classical Period









This period was generally from 1750 to 1820. Artists and musicians moved away from the heavily ornamented style of the Baroque period and instead embraced a clean, uncluttered style they thought was reminiscent of Classical Greece. Newly established aristocrats were replacing monarchs and the church as patrons of the arts. These newly rich land owners were demanding elegant and tuneful music. Minuets and gavottes were popular dances of this era and many composers were kept busy writing the music for these dances. At this period of time, Vienna, Austria was the musical center of Europe. Composers came from all over Europe to train in Vienna. Classical music reached its culmination with masterful symphonies, sonatas, and string quartets. Music of the Classical Period adhered to a strict compositional form that became known as "sonata form". Some of the greatest composers during the Classical Period were: Franz Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Muzio Clementi, Zdenek Fibich, Franz Schubert and Ludwig van Beethoven. Beethoven and Schubert's music built a bridge from the Classical Period into The Romantic Era.


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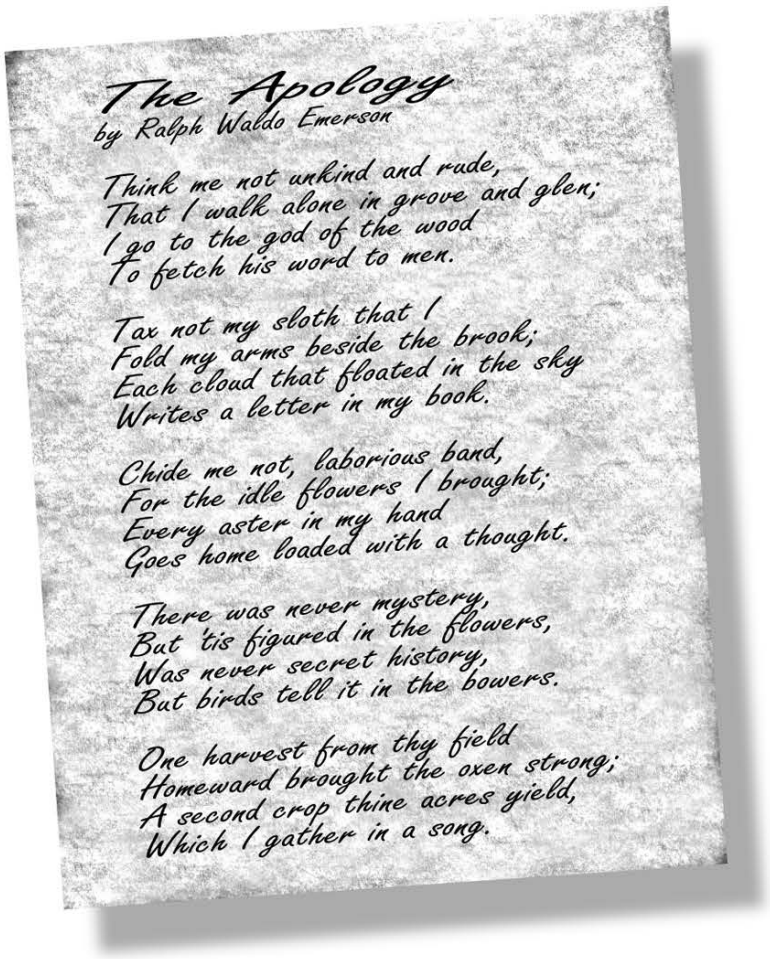
## The Romantic Era

The Romantic Era was from 1820 to 1900. Artists and composers began expressing their personal emotions in their art and music. This was a time of social and political revolutions. Nationalist composers began to write music that glorified their homelands. Operas were being written about peasants. Folk Music was being incorporated into large musical compositions. Symphony orchestras were larger than ever and were using new musical instruments and sounds. Ludwig van Beethoven began writing powerful symphonies that expressed man's inner emotions and turmoil. Ballets were being written. The common person at last was being recognized as an important part of society. Great composers of The Romantic Era were: Franz Schubert, Ludwig van Beethoven, Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, Frederic Chopin, Hector Berlioz, Franz Liszt, Carl Maria von Weber, Giuseppe Verdi, Richard Wagner, Johannes Brahms and Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky.



*The Apology*
by Ralph Waldo Emerson

Think me not unkind and rude,
That I walk alone in grove and glen;
I go to the god of the wood
To fetch his word to men.

Tax not my sloth that I
Fold my arms beside the brook;
Each cloud that floated in the sky
Writes a letter in my book.

Chide me not, laborious band,
For the idle flowers I brought;
Every aster in my hand
Goes home loaded with a thought.

There was never mystery,
But 'tis figured in the flowers,
Was never secret history,
But birds tell it in the bowers.

One harvest from thy field
Homeward brought the oxen strong;
A second crop thine acres yield,
Which I gather in a song.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## The Twentieth Century or Contemporary Period

This period stretches from 1900 to the present time. At the turn of the 20th century, artists and composers of all nationalities were searching for different and exciting modes of expression, art, and sound. Unorthodox harmonies and tonal schemes were being explored by composers such as Arnold Schoenberg. Claude Debussy was fascinated by Eastern music and whole-tone scales and created a style of music that became known as impressionism. Bela Bartok continued the Nationalist movement that was established during the Romantic Era. He went about recording the music of Hungarian peasants. The symphony was modified by this time with new instruments. This attracted composers such as Gustav Mahler, Dmitri Shostakovich, and Igor Stravinsky. Italian opera composer Giacomo Puccini and the Russian composer/pianist Sergei Rachmaninoff were also large contributors to this era of music. Edward MacDowell, George Gershwin, Aaron Copeland, Scott Joplin, Stephen Foster, John Phillip Sousa, Leonard Bernstein, Richard Rogers, Cole Porter, Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, Stephen Sondheim, Andrew Lloyd Weber, Morton Gould, and John Williams plus numerous other greats make the 20th Century an exciting time for music composition and new music styles. During the present era, electronic music is making its presence known. What new musical treats await us over the next hill?




*1934 Duesenberg*


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