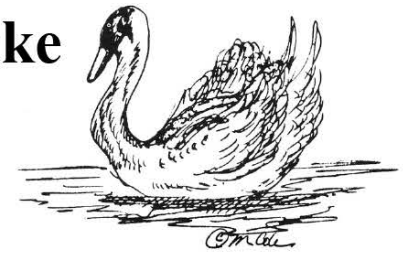
The MAYRON COLE PIANO METHOD

Scene from Swan Lake



Swan Lake is one of Peter Tchaikovsky's most loved ballets. This romantic selection, commonly referred to as "*Scene*," was arranged by Colleen Cole from the orchestral score.

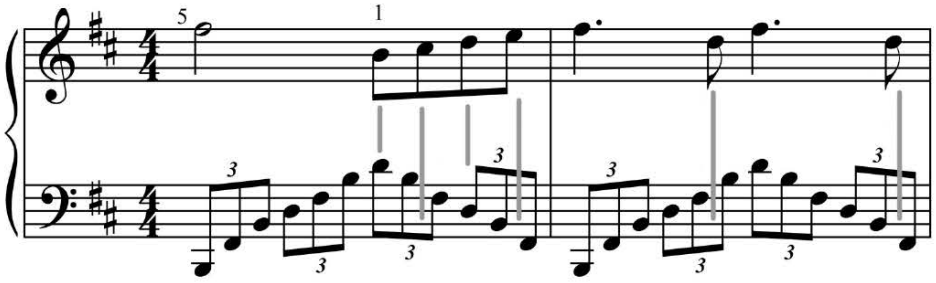
1. The key signature of *Scene from Swan Lake* is two sharps. What two scales use two sharps for a key signature? _____Major and _____minor.

2. Look at the first measure of *Scene from Swan Lake*. All of the notes in M. 1 are spelling the _____(B or F) minor chord.

3. Look at M. 20 of *Scene from Swan Lake*. What is the low note in the bass clef?_____ What is the high note in the treble clef?_____

You have had several compositions that play two notes in the RH against three notes in the LH. Here is the rhythm rule again: Strike the beat notes together; see-saw the remaining notes in the beat. The hand that breaks the beat into the most notes starts the see-saw.

Below you see measures 2 and 3 from *Scene from Swan Lake*. The pale gray lines will help you see how the rhythm is played. Keep the LH triplets steady and fit the RH eighth notes in between consistent LH triplet rhythm.



Practice playing the above measures; then with your piano class, play the above measures aloud.

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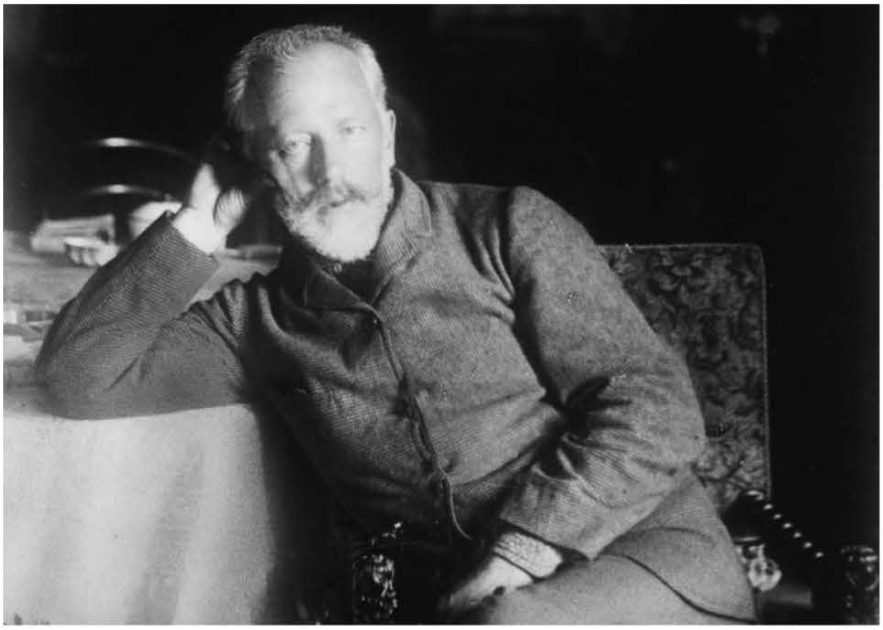
About the Composer...

Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)



Peter Tchaikovsky is the best known of all the great Russian composers of the 19th century. He was born in the village of Votkinsk, which was in the Ural Mountains of Russia. When he was seven, he began studying piano but showed no great talent. When he was ten, his family moved to what is now Leningrad. There he received traditional Russian schooling, studied law, and at nineteen became a clerk in the Ministry of Justice.

But at this point in his life, Tchaikovsky realized that he really wanted to be a musician. He began studying composition and music theory but kept his job at the Ministry of Justice. To the surprise of his friends and family, one day Peter quit his job so that he could devote all of his time to music.

The Moscow Conservatory had just been established and there was a need for a professor of music theory. Tchaikovsky was hired! This was a big leap of faith for the people who ran the Conservatory since Tchaikovsky had received very little training in music theory. Tchaikovsky retained this position for twelve years.

But Tchaikovsky really wanted to be a composer instead of a teacher of music theory. At first he tried his hand at symphonic poems and opera. But his music was not "Russian enough" according to the music critics. Tchaikovsky was trying to do too much and his emotional health paid the price.

Fortunately for him, help came in the form of a wealthy widow: Nadezhda von Meck. Mrs. Von Meck was the mother-in-law of Tchaikovsky's niece. The wealthy widow was fond of helping struggling musicians and interesting composers. She became Tchaikovsky's benefactor. But Tchaikovsky's relationship with the wealthy widow was a strange one. The two corresponded for many years but never met!

Mrs. Von Meck came into Tchaikovsky's life during one of his darkest periods. He had married one of his piano students and the marriage was a complete disaster! Tchaikovsky became so depressed that he threw himself into the Moskva River while trying to catch pneumonia. But he only caught a cold!

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The widow immediately sent Tchaikovsky to Switzerland, France, and Italy to recover his mental health. During those difficult days, he wrote some of his happiest music.

Tchaikovsky returned a much more contented man. He spent part of each year in Moscow and the rest of the year in the country. His credo was to write music every day. Yet, though Tchaikovsky's music is now well loved, Tchaikovsky met with many bitter disappointments. In 1877 Swan Lake was performed, but Russian music critics were extremely critical. The music was "too beautiful" to be Russian. Then he wrote the Sleeping Beauty ballet and the Christmas favorite, The Nutcracker ballet. These ballets were not completely successful at their first performances, either.

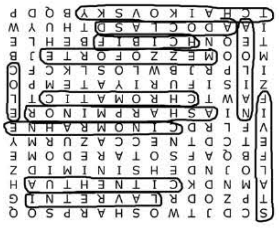
Then Tchaikovsky wrote the now-famous Piano Concerto in B-flat Minor. He wrote this composition for Nicholas Rubinstein. But Rubinstein refused to perform it because he considered it "unplayable". He then wrote a Violin Concerto in D, which was intended for violinist Leopold Auer. Auer also rejected the composition and refused to play it!

At this time, Tchaikovsky was invited to America to conduct several of his works at the dedication of Carnegie Hall in New York City. He encountered more enthusiasm in America then he had ever experienced in Russia! The accolades that he received while on the American trip did much to boost Tchaikovsky's fragile self-esteem.

Much of Tchaikovsky's music has been described as "too sentimental" and "not really Russian". But unbiased symphony conductors now proclaim Peter Tchaikovsky as a truly gifted composer. He did not parade his nationalism through his music, but he did expose his personal feelings. But the great Igor Stravinsky said of Tchaikovsky, "He was the most Russian of us all."

The true cause of Tchaikovsky's death has always been debated. But the official ruling is that Tchaikovsky died of cholera.





answers from page 48:

Answers: 1. Interval; 2. Aeolian; 3. Tchaikovsky; 4. Five Flats; 5. Enharmonic; 6. Authentic; 7. Cole; 8. D S al Coda; 9. A Sharp Minor; 10. Chromatic; 11. Fibich; 12. Mezzo Forte

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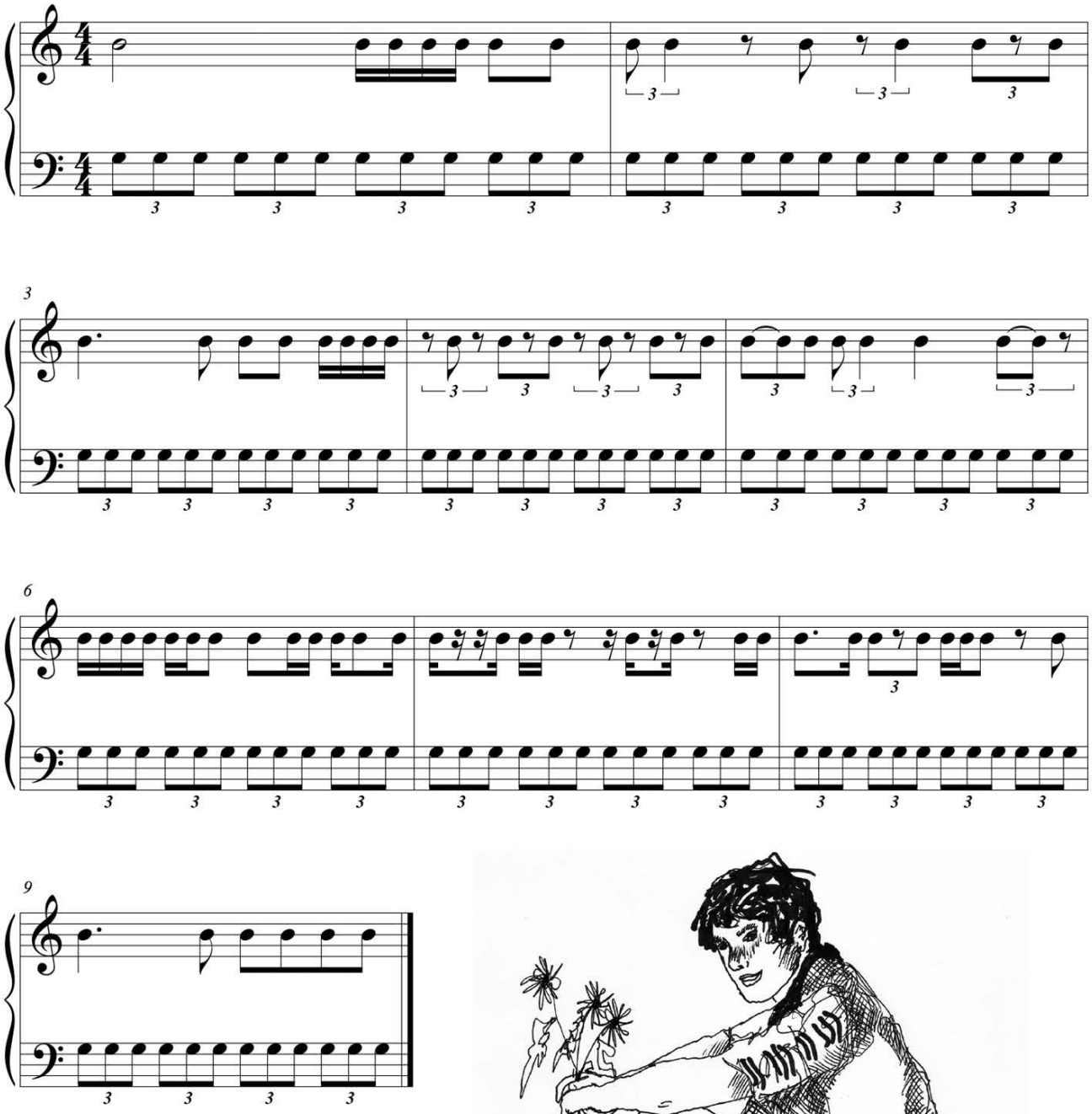
Rhythm Taps to Impress Your Family and Friends!

Mayron Cole



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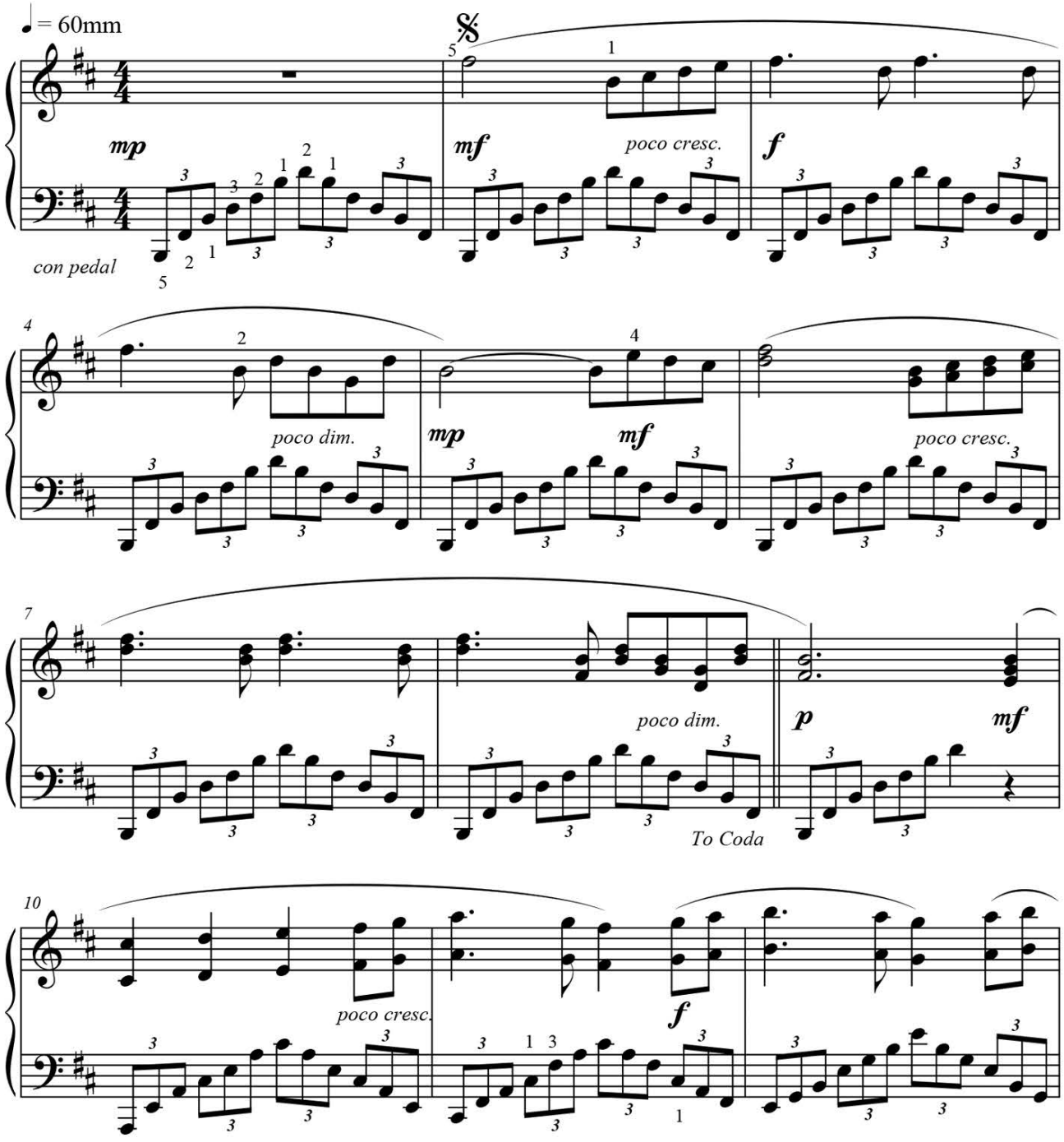
Scene from Swan Lake

(orchestrated accompaniment has a 2 measure count-in)



(wedding music)

Peter Tchaikovsky
Arranged by Colleen Cole



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13

ff *dim.* *mf* *cresc.*

15

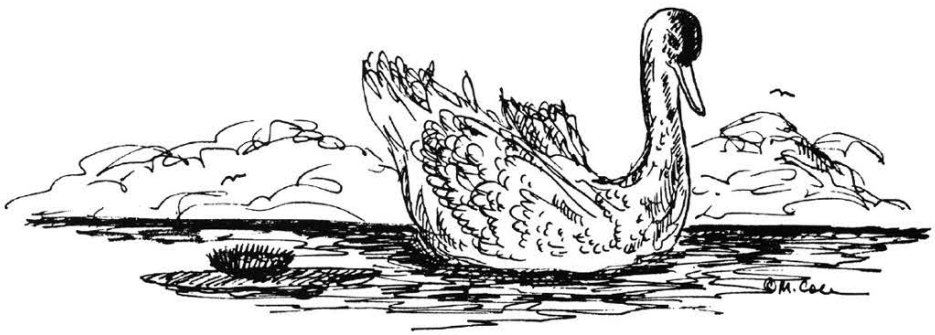
f

17

ff *dim.* *f* *ff* *mf* *D.S. al Coda*

19

rit. & dim. *pp*



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