

*Georgia Music Teachers Association- State Conference
Piedmont University
Saturday, November 8, 2025*

**American Idioms at the Keyboard:
Rediscovering Dello Joio, Muczynski, Thomson, Creston, Adler, and Griffes**

Dr. Vicente Della Tonia, Jr.
Georgia State University/Perimeter
vdellatonia@gsu.edu

I. Introduction & Context

- 20th Century Movements
- Core trend

II. Composers, Style, Pedagogical Use, Repertoire Sample

Norman Dello Joio (1913–2008)

- Suite for the Young (10 pieces, elem.–int.)
- Lyric Pieces for the Young (6 pieces, int.)
- Suite for Piano (4 movements, late elem.–adv.)

Robert Muczynski (1929–2010)

- Fables, Op. 21 (9 pieces, elem.–int.)
- A Summer Journey, Op. 19 (7 pieces, elem.–adv.)
- Six Preludes, Op. 6 (adv.)

Paul Creston (1906–1985)

- Five Little Dances, Op. 24 (elem.)
- Whirling Dervishes (int.)
- Preludes, Op. 38 (adv.)

Virgil Thomson (1896–1989)

- Sonata for Piano No. 3 (elem.–int.)
- Seventeen Portraits for Piano (int.)
- Ten Etudes for Piano (adv.)

Samuel Adler (b. 1928)

- Gradus (multi-vol. etudes, elem.–adv.)
- Capriccio for Piano (int.–adv.)
- Fantasy for Piano (adv.)

Charles Tomlinson Griffes (1884–1920)

- Six Pieces for Treble Clef (elem.)
- Three Tone-Pieces, Op. 5 (adv.)
- Roman Sketches, Op. 7 (adv.)

III. Final Considerations

- Musical Identity
- “Bridges”
- Toolkit
- Legacy

IV. Suggested Bibliography

Adler, Samuel. *The Study of Orchestration*. W.W. Norton, 2002.

Burkholder, J. Peter, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca. *A History of Western Music*. 10th ed. W.W. Norton, 2019.

Copland, Aaron. *Music and Imagination*. Harvard University Press, 1952.

Creston, Paul. *Principles of Rhythm*. Mills Music, 1964.

Gann, Kyle. *American Music in the Twentieth Century*. Wadsworth/Thomson, 1997.

Hinson, Maurice. *Guide to the Pianist's Repertoire*. 4th ed. Indiana University Press, 2014.

Morgan, Robert P. *Twentieth-Century Music: A History of Musical Style in Modern Europe and America*. W.W. Norton, 1991.

Thomson, Virgil. *Virgil Thomson: A Reader*. Houghton Mifflin, 1981.

Tick, Judith, and Paul Beaudoin, eds. *Music in the USA: A Documentary Companion*. Oxford University Press, 2008.

Journal of the Society for American Music; *American Musicological Society Publications*.