HOW TO USE THE MODIFIED VERSION OF THE "RHAPSODY IN BLUE" WITH EITHER ORCHESTRA OR BAND

The following instructions are made available to those wishing to use the Modified Piano Solo arrangement of the "Rhapsody" with Orchestra or Band. (A special list of instructions is available in all scores of the Rhapsody in Blue for Band to be observed when Solo Piano is used.)

The **SOLO PIANO** starts at the top of page **3**, at the change of Key — playing continuously through the double bar on page **10**, ending with an **A major Chord** in quarter notes on the first beat **after** the double bar.

The **SOLO PIANO** rests until the first measure, second line on page **11**, then playing continuously up to and including the third line on page **13**.

The **SOLO PIANO** then enters once more beginning the second measure on page **14** through measure two at the top of page **15**, ending with a **G major Chord** in the **second inversion** at the beginning of the third measure, and resting until the beginning of page **16**.

From the top of page **16**, the **SOLO PIANO** enters and continues to the bottom of page **23** without pause.

The **SOLO PIANO** rests to the beginning of the third line on page **25**, to and including the second measure of the fourth line on the same page (**25**), taking up again at the top of page **26** to the end of the first line of that page.

The **SOLO PIANO** again enters at the beginning of the third line of page **26** and continues to the end, but allowance of two measures rest must be made after the double bar on page **35**.

Note to Orchestra and Band Conductors: When the Modified Piano Solo edition is used in the Solo part, a cut must be made from the double bar immediately before [14] to [20] Also cut from two measures before [22] to the fifth measure after [24]

THE "RHAPSODY IN BLUE"

George Gershwin wrote the "Rhapsody in Blue" for piano solo and jazz band (the latter orchestrated by Ferde Grofé) for a concert by Paul Whiteman and his band in Aeolian Hall, February 12, 1924. So much is history.

Paul Whiteman, then "king of jazz" realized a long ambition on the day of that memorable concert—an ambition to prove to the exponents of musical culture that the creations of "tin pan alley" represented an important and not to be ignored factor in American music; that such music presented in ingenious instrumental investiture offered a challenge to musical tradition. The point was won. The Whiteman concert was the beginning of a new era in composition, to say nothing of orchestrating and arranging.

But something else happened at that concert. George Gershwin, a rising young composer of the "alley", at Whiteman's instigation and insistence, wrote a composition in the jazz idiom for piano and jazz band called a "Rhapsody in Blue"—"a rhapsody", said Gershwin, "something where I won't be bound down"—fearing adverse criticism should he attempt to risk a more formal style. Musical history was made at the first performance. It definitely established jazz as a serious medium for musical composition, so much so that European composers dabbled with the idiom, but with little or no success, here, at least, where the idiom is native. Deems Taylor aptly said of Gershwin—"he is the link between the jazz camp and the intellectuals".

The "Rhapsody in Blue" has become the corner stone of a type of music which has come to be called "American". The composition has risen from the domain of the dance band to the repertoire of the symphony orchestra and it has, on its own merit as a musical composition, been alloted a definite place in the literature of serious music.

THE "MODIFIED" EDITION

The "Rhapsody" in its original form for piano and orchestra is available to all who wish to study or play the work as originally conceived. The publishers desiring to provide greater availability for a work of such importance secured from the composer a Piano Solo version, wherein the solo piano and orchestral parts are fused together making the entire composition available for the piano.

Of more recent moment, it was feared that the many technical demands of the original and solo versions created somewhat of a barrier to pianists not possessing a requisite technic, but the problem of modification was a delicate one from an editorial viewpoint, the death of the composer in 1938 precluding any modification from Gershwin himself. Many attempts at technical modification of the "Rhapsody" were rejected on ethical grounds until Herman Wasserman, who taught Gershwin the piano, submitted a manuscript of the present edition. Editorial analysis was not convincing enough. Several prominent pianists, teachers and Gershwin enthusiasts were consulted and subscribed their opinions individually and in confidence, all attesting to the amazing reduction in technical demands and the musicianly treatment of the score from a standpoint of clarity and effect.

The "Modified" edition of the "Rhapsody in Blue" presents the entire composition technically modified, but retaining the brilliance and effect of the original. The editon is designed for pianists of limited or immature technical skill.

HERMAN WASSERMAN

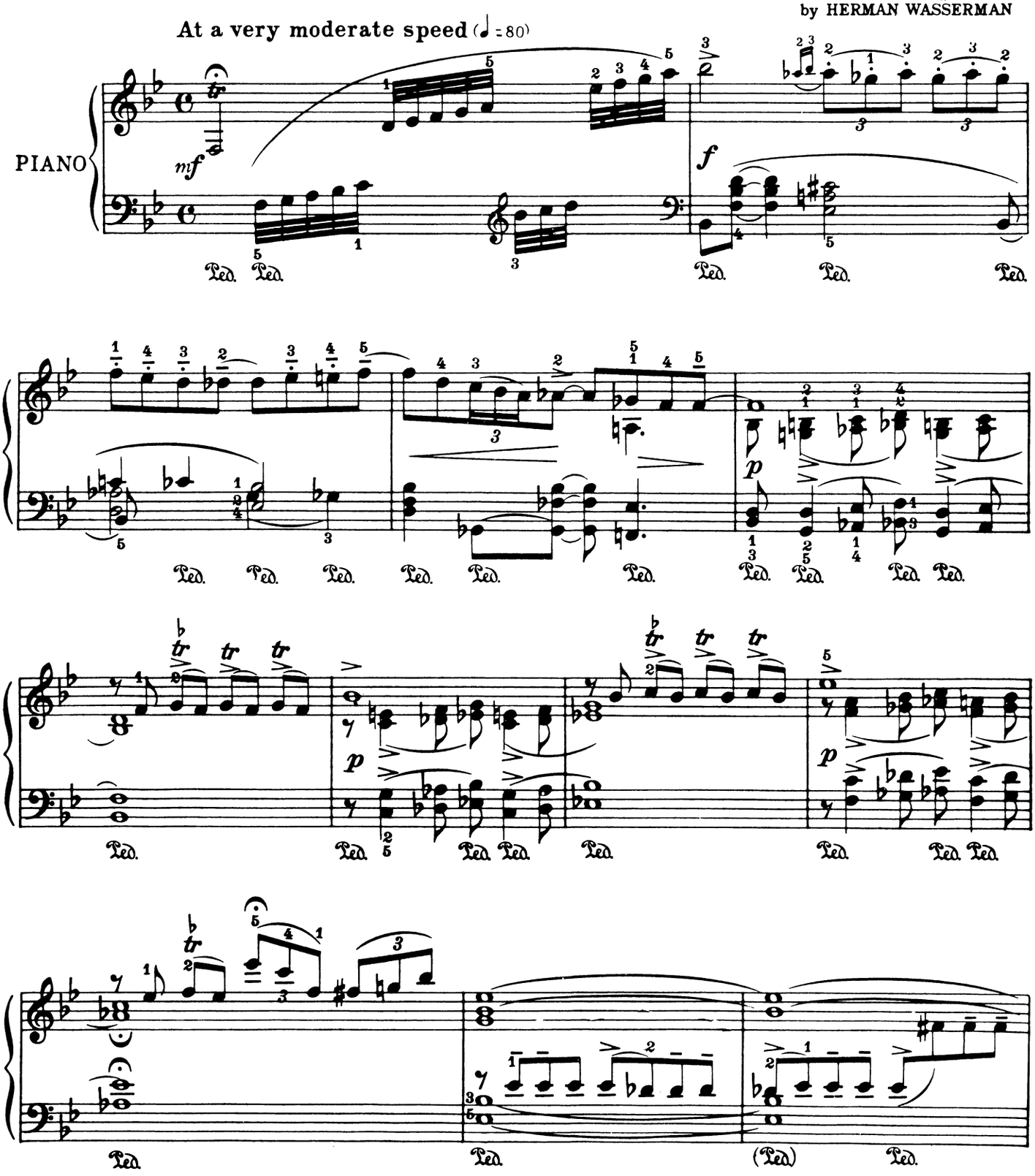
Herman Wasserman is a pianist of international repute, sponsored in the United States by the Pulitzer family, the late Otto H. Kahn and Henry Seligman. He studied piano with Rafael Joseffy and Leopold Godowsky, theory and composition at the Royal Academy of Vienna. His superb concert transcriptions of American popular songs are gems of harmonic and polyphonic writing. Herman Wasserman has been acclaimed and recognized as one of the foremost pedagogues of the piano in this country. Among his many pupils were George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Ferde Grofé, David Mendoza, Johnnie Green and Eddie Duchin.

F.C.W.

RHAPSODY IN BLUE

Modified Version For Piano Solo

GEORGE GERSHWIN
Modified after the Original Edition
by HERMAN WASSERMAN



Pedal marks or notes in brackets, may be used or omitted as one wishes.

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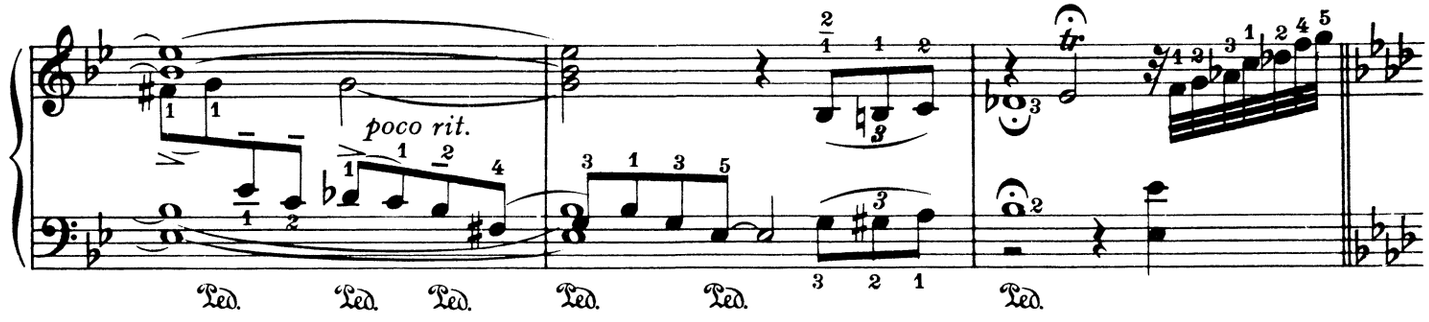
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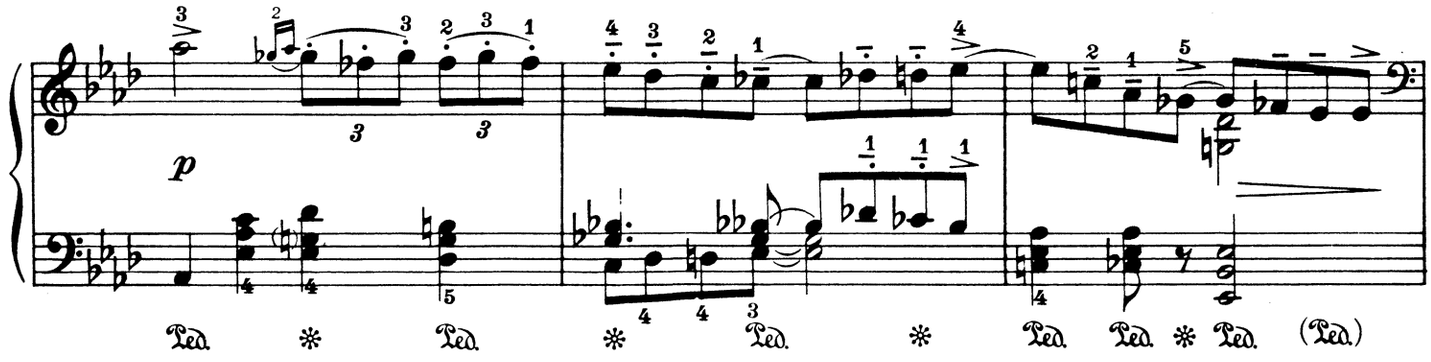
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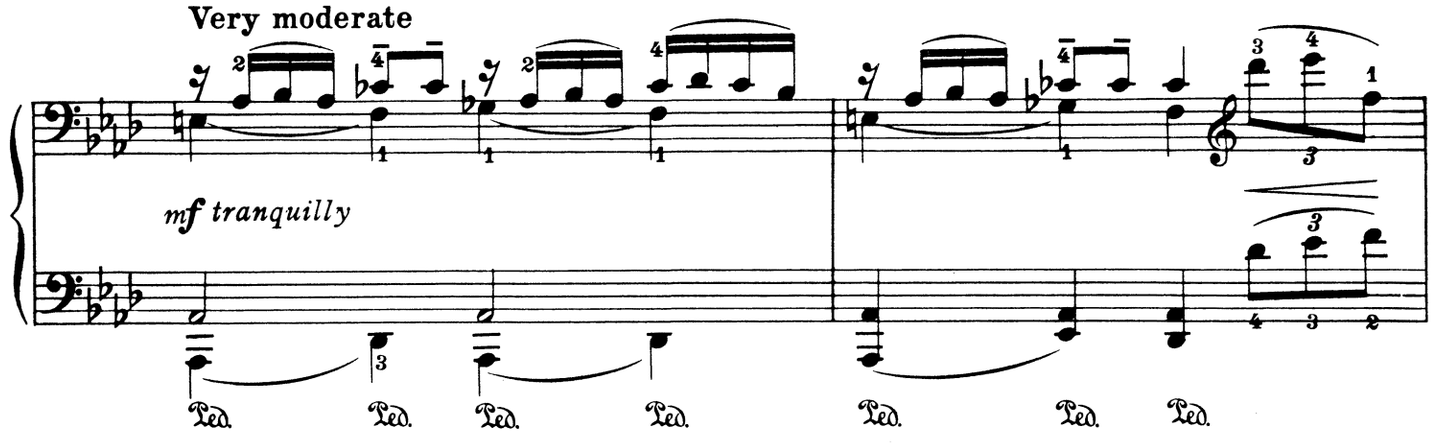
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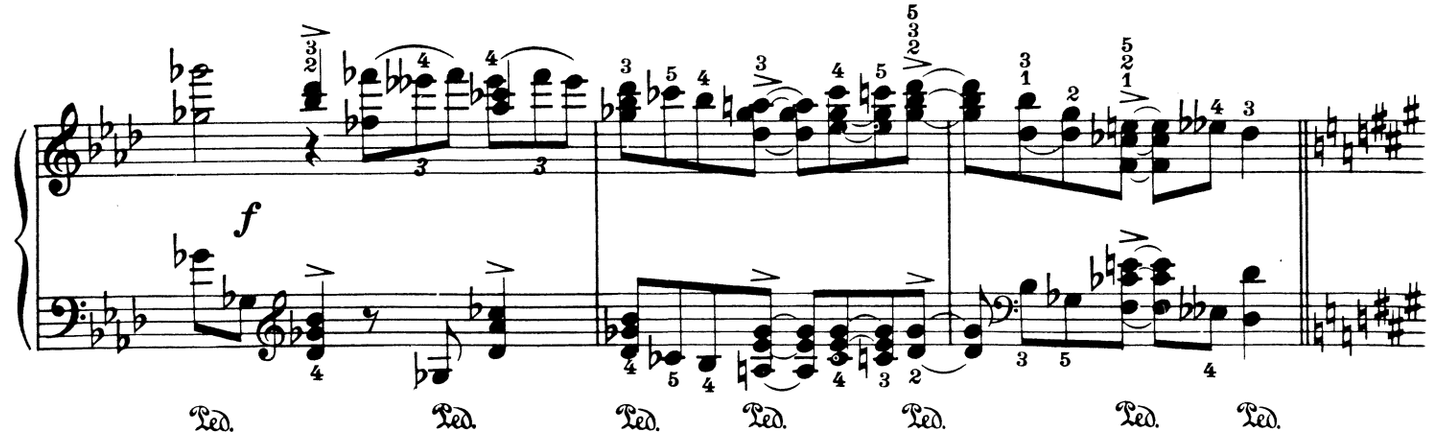
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