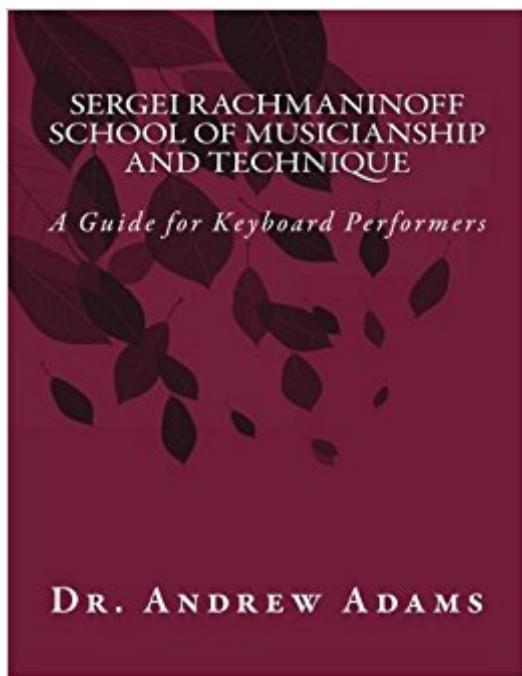


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# Sergei Rachmaninoff School Of Musicianship And Technique: A Guide For Keyboard Performers



## **Synopsis**

Based on an article written in 1923 by legendary Russian pianist and composer Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943), this volume presents the series of chords, arpeggios, and scales that Rachmaninoff himself studied as a young man. The Preface contains a short history explaining Rachmaninoff's use of this exercise and demonstrates that similar studies were included in some of the earliest keyboard methods dating to the eighteenth century. More than finger exercises, these patterns encourage harmonic thinking and reflect the modern approach to piano technique with its emphasis on engaged practice. Having its roots in the earliest history of keyboard pedagogy, and practiced and promoted by Sergei Rachmaninoff, Josef Lhvinne, Franz Liszt, and other legendary pianists, the exercises in this volume are a true link to the Golden Age of piano performance. Without question, diligent study will greatly improve every dedicated student's musicianship and technique.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Dr. Andrew Adams is the Assistant Professor of Piano at Western Carolina University in North Carolina, USA. He earned the Bachelor of Music in Piano from the Kansas City Conservatory of Music and the Master of Music in Vocal Coaching and Accompanying from the University of Illinois. In April 2005, he completed his Doctorate in Piano Performance at the University of Colorado. For six summers (1996-2001) he was a vocal coach at the Utah Festival Opera Company in Logan, Utah. Dr. Adams was Vocal Coach and Director of Collaborative Piano at Iowa State University from

2003 to 2006. He serves on the editorial board of and has published six articles in *The Journal of Singing*, the official publication of the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Co-authored with Dr. Bradley Martin, his first book is entitled *Hanon Restored: Charles-Louis Hanon's Five-finger Exercises Restored to His Original Design* (Stipes Publishing). An active accompanist and chamber musician, he has accompanied recitals throughout the United States and in Russia.

This book presents a very interesting approach to organizing scale and arpeggio practice. Rather than systematically working through major and minor scales in all keys via cycle-of-fifths patterns, Dr. Adams expands a simple chord exercise by Rachmaninoff into a formula that covers a lot more harmonic territory in the same amount of time. This exercise engages one's ears and fingers in new ways, incorporating a sort of modal/harmonic approach to scale practice. Once you've memorized the basic harmonic pattern, it becomes easy to translate into other types of technical exercises that pianists practice: scales in thirds and sixths, varied scale sequences and broken chord shapes. Unfortunately, Adams does not exhaust these possibilities in the text, nor does he provide other examples of harmonic formulae that could provide additional variety to the technical routine. The essential premise of the book is detailed in only a few pages, leaving the remainder of the text to simply print transpositions of the basic chord, scale and arpeggio patterns in every key. A deeper investigation into the "common-tone" technique of chord progression/modulation, and the systems of harmonic formulae developed by Villoing and Safonoff, would have provided a much more complete insight into the training and education of Rachmaninoff as a pianist and composer. As it stands, this little volume is an excellent reference for developing musicians. It provides a very musical way to practice the essential types of triads and seventh chords, while connecting the harmonic idea with scale and arpeggio practice. It's unfortunate that some of its more unique ideas weren't developed further. Understand that it's a technical exercise book, and take its presumptuous title with a big spoonful of salt

I was scared of the title at first. Ordered it to see what it was all about though and quickly worked it into my exercises routine. Love the non-crowded format of book and the exercises are short which is great for younger students or when first learning. (Of course, anyone can run them 4 octaves easily) The common tone approach is fantastic and really helps in understanding harmony and building chords. I have given a copy to two of my teenage students and they are truly liking the exercises. It's amazing. I only wish the book was spiral-bound! Not only are these exercises wonderful for learning all chords and arpeggios, they even make understanding modes easier. I will be using this book for

myself and for my students from now on.

This is exercises like scales, arpeggios, etc. as the students studied in the Russian conservatory at the time Rachmaninov was a student. I have had Russian teachers who sometimes spoke of it a bit, but never took the time to teach it to me. I really like to have it as another way to develop a sense of harmony as you play, to prepare the fingers to just mechanize certain structures. If you are really serious in your piano playing, and you are young, you need to get this book. If you are already a pianist, it is interesting and fun.

lots of piano technical details and history there is not substitute for basic skill training a bit dry

This is a good study for keyboardists starting out that need to learn chords, scales and arpeggios in a way that relates them all together. With a bit of thought and knowledge the material could be extended to include modes and other chords that relate to each other in similar ways.

Don't expect to get much insight into Rachmaninov or the Russian school. Far too many chord progressions without theoretical underpinnings, and not enough narrative. Dry and disappointing. Could have been so much more.

Good book, though I was looking for more "dialogue" from Mr. Rachmaninoff himself discussing his actual views and approaches to technique!! Just a little disappointed!!

fair

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