



Escenas poéticas: Danza de la Rosa Enrique Granados

♪ Niveau 50/100 (Ambitieux)

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Chord voicing You can influence precisely how loud every note sounds within chords. Our default may simply be to use the wrist to affect a downward strike of the keys and let each chord note fend for itself. The trouble is we'll probably hear a flat, one-dimensional effect (and the lower down the keyboard we go, the more important voicing becomes). What's more, there is little prospect of drawing out multiple lines from a string of rich harmonies unless we can control precisely what we hear. Few of us make the piano *sound* orchestral because we are thinking in vertical blocks, not how each block connects musically to its neighbours.

Chord voicing is really an extension of the logic we employ for balancing the hands – but here we are working with the notes played by one hand. Not unlike pedalling, the technique itself is easily learned, but to finesse it takes practice and keen listening skills. Essentially, if we're wanting our chosen note in the chord to sound louder, it will need to travel faster than those surrounding it.

Let's start with a two-note chord, C and E, played with the 2nd and 4th fingers of your right hand. Put the pedal down and begin repeating the chord slowly at a dynamic of *mf*. When ready, make the E sound louder, not by rotating the wrist or 'digging in' with the 4th finger, but by sliding the finger towards you over the top of the key an inch or so as the chord is struck. Once you've got the hang of this, experiment with voicing the lower note, C, by sliding the 2nd finger towards you. You'll love hearing the note ping out. Any asynchrony between the notes should repair itself soon enough – look out through the window and do all this by sound and feel – it's not very visual. Then try three, four or even five-note chords. Don't forget the left hand, and see what sorts of effects you can produce with both hands playing a chordal passage – such as the right-hand rising chords in Mussorgsky's *Promenade*.



Take a week to explore this quick study. Notice the grace notes, acciaccaturas and arpeggiated chord. Silently play the piece through, identifying the keyboard geography, fingering and hand-crossing. The pedaling is the composer's own; make sure you play it accurately. Use appropriate dynamics to bring out the voice parts.

Danza de la Rosa

Enrique Granados
(1867–1916)

Non vivo e molto semplice con ritmo ♩ = c.96