

The Art of Piano Performance: PEDALING

By PROFESSOR PETER CORAGGIO

ILLUSTRATED by JON J. MURAKAMI

FEATURING...



MAESTRO PROFONDO

Musician
extraordinaire



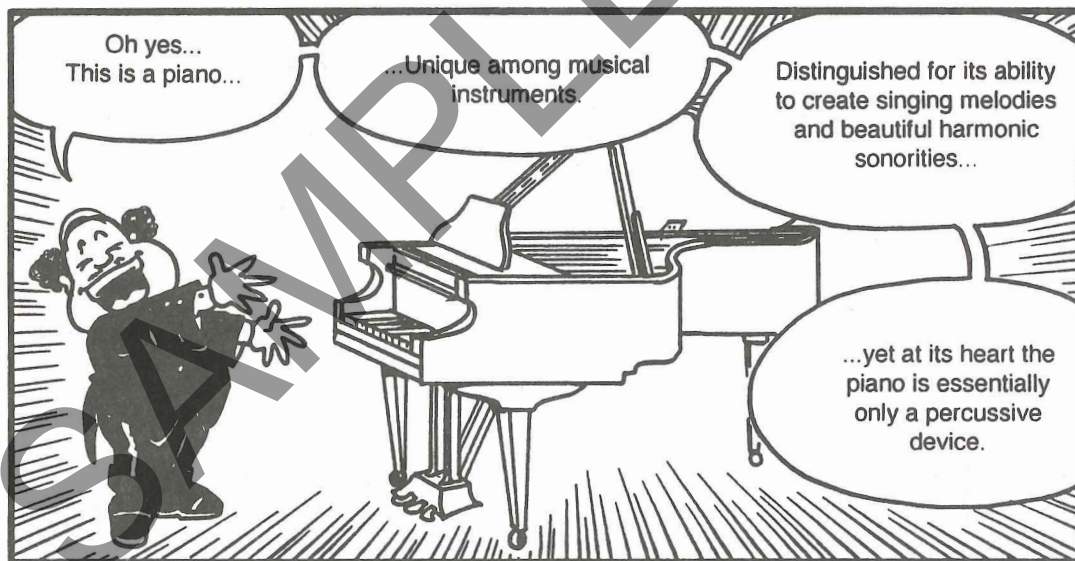
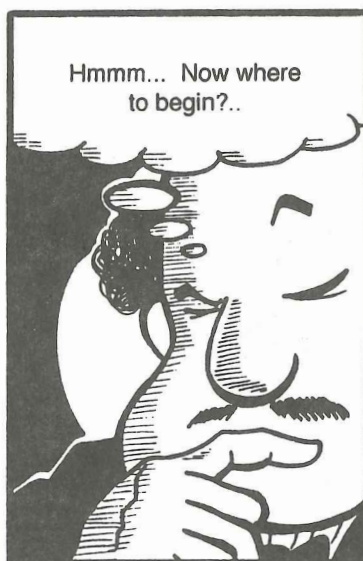
MUSABELLA

Profondo's lovely
teaching assistant

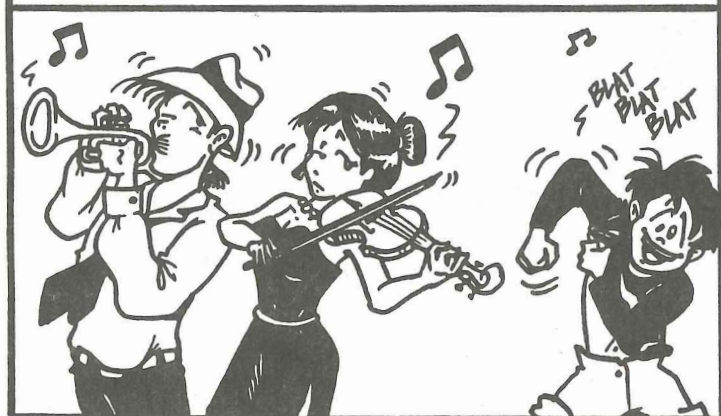


AGITATO

Neophyte
student



Most musical instruments are held when played and act as extensions of your body and voice. Musical tones are most often made by blowing or bowing.



The piano is not held when played. The pianist, flipping down levers (keys) with fingers, tosses hammers at strings, forcing them to vibrate and make tones.



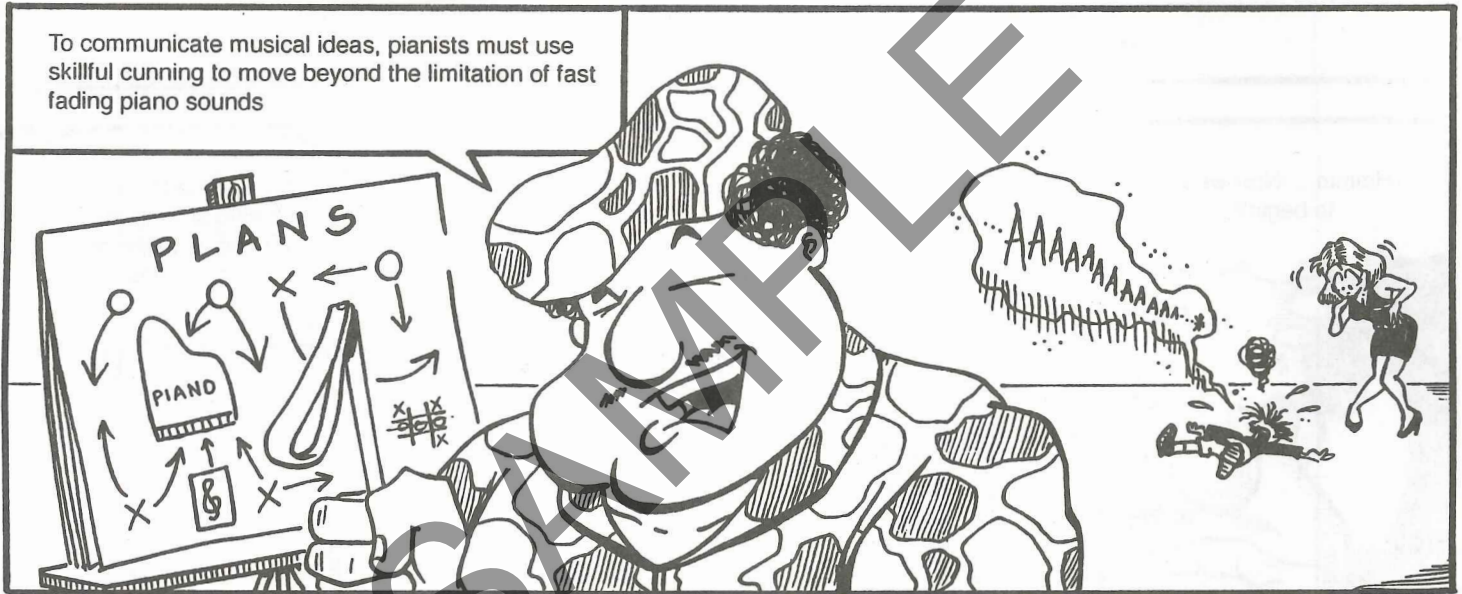
The voice and most musical instruments can make tones which get louder, remain at one level, or change expressively while being held.



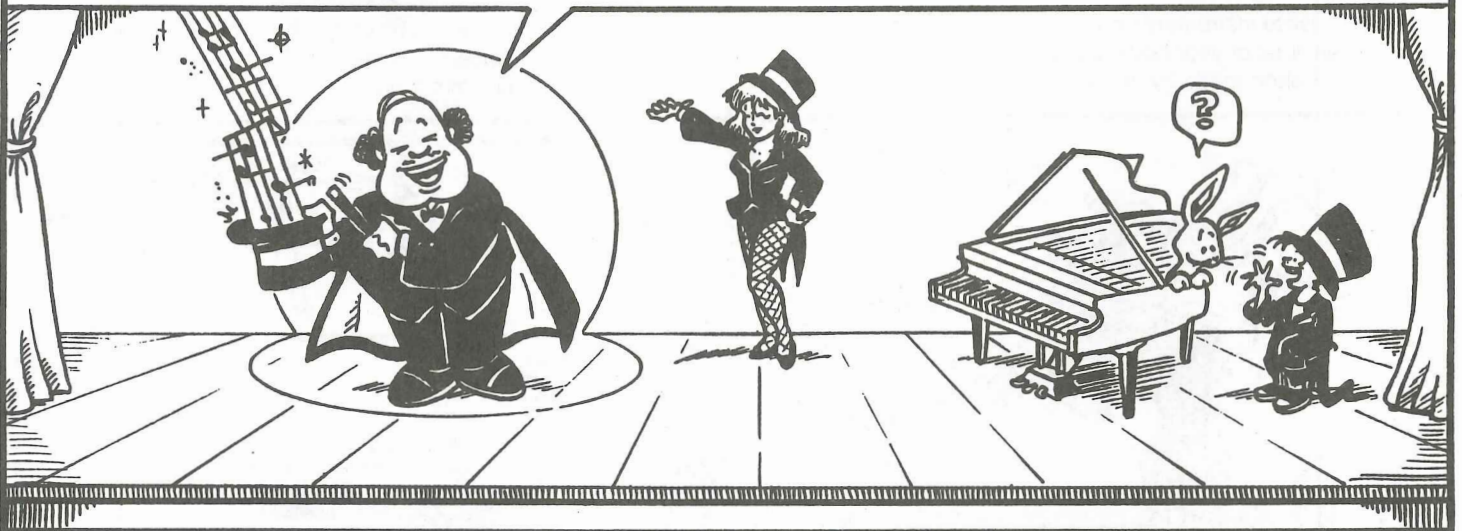
But piano sounds begin life suddenly and then fade away. Some tones last for only a few seconds.

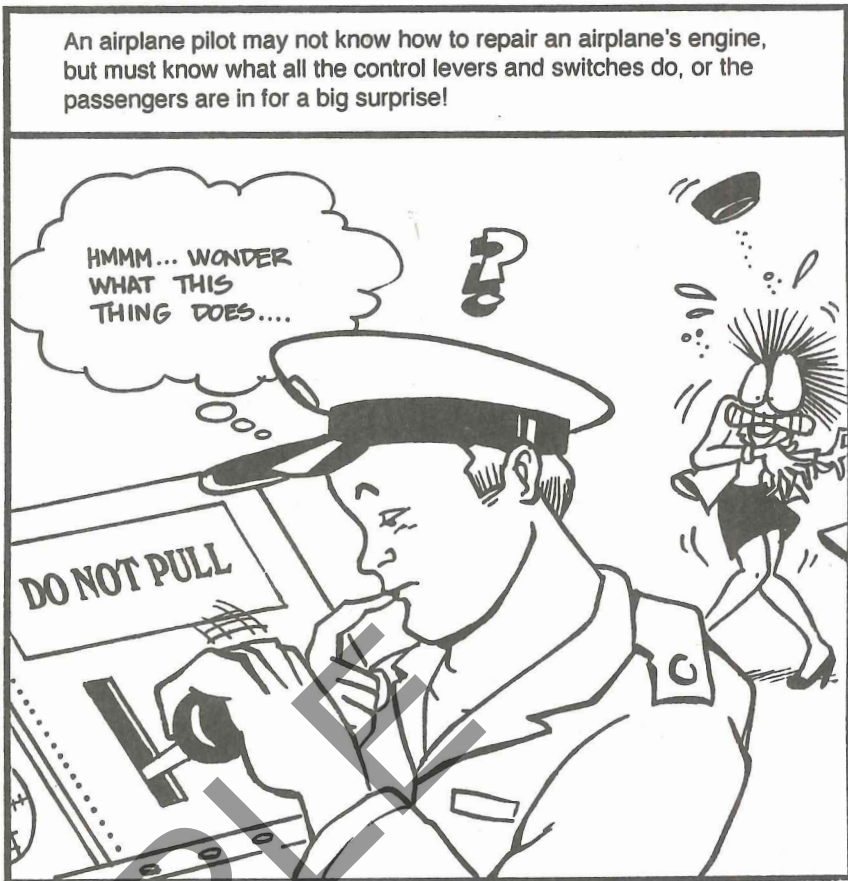
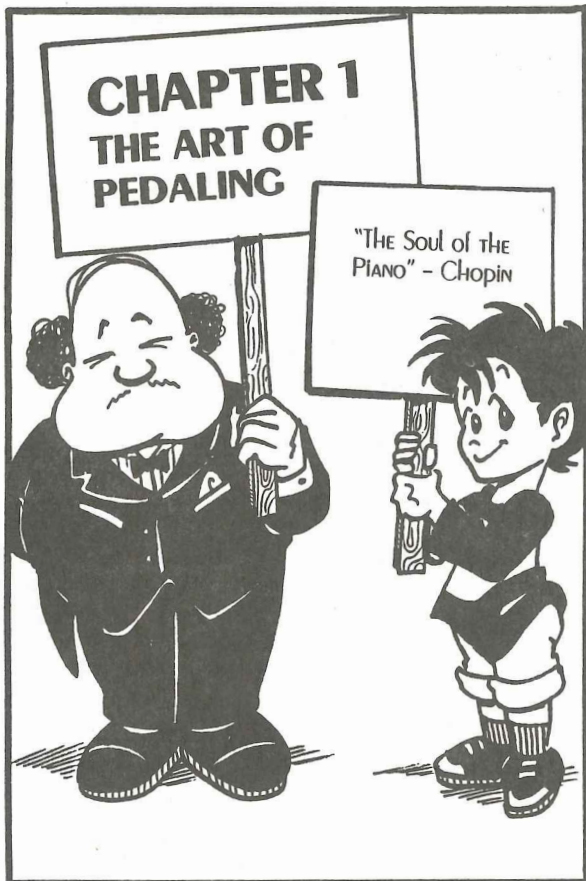


To communicate musical ideas, pianists must use skillful cunning to move beyond the limitation of fast fading piano sounds



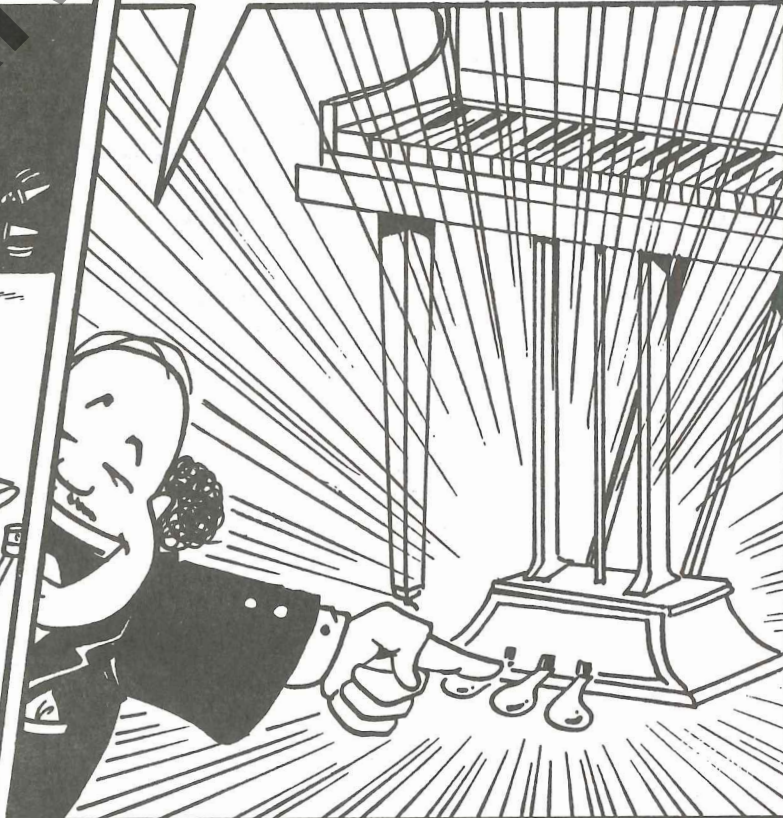
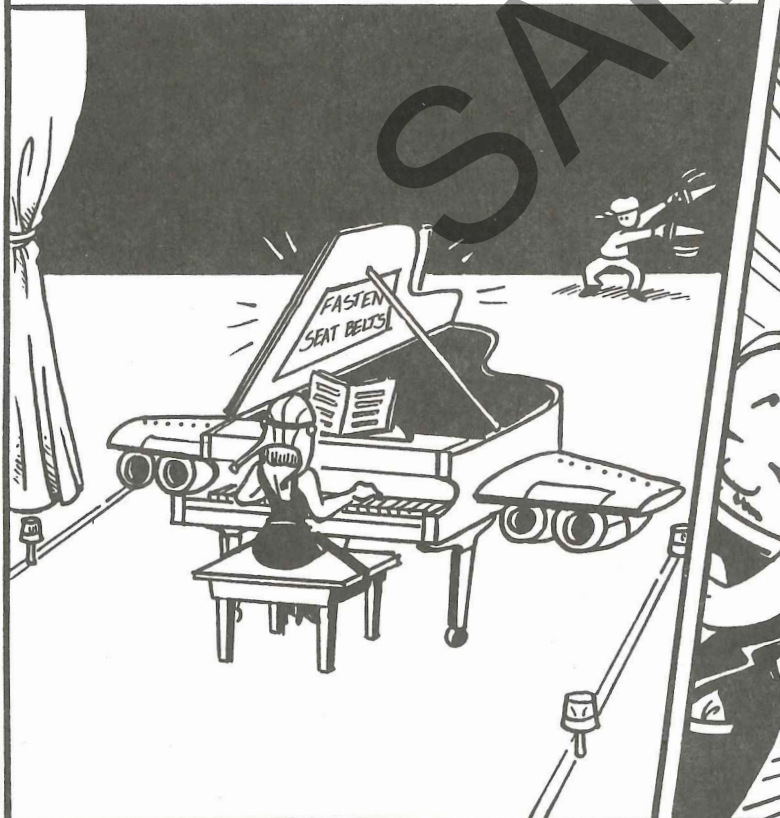
Making enchanting music or keyboard magic with the piano requires clever skills and a knowledge of the art of musical illusion. A keyboard artist is not just a musician, but a shrewd magician who possesses a bag of tricks.



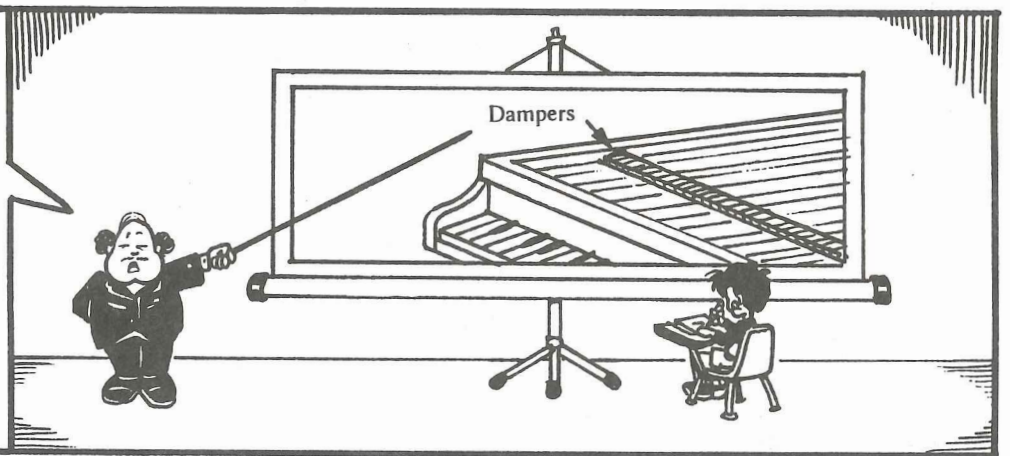


A pianist may not be able to repair or tune a piano, but must clearly understand what all the levers can do to skillfully and gracefully "fly" the piano, or there may be a "crash" in public performance.

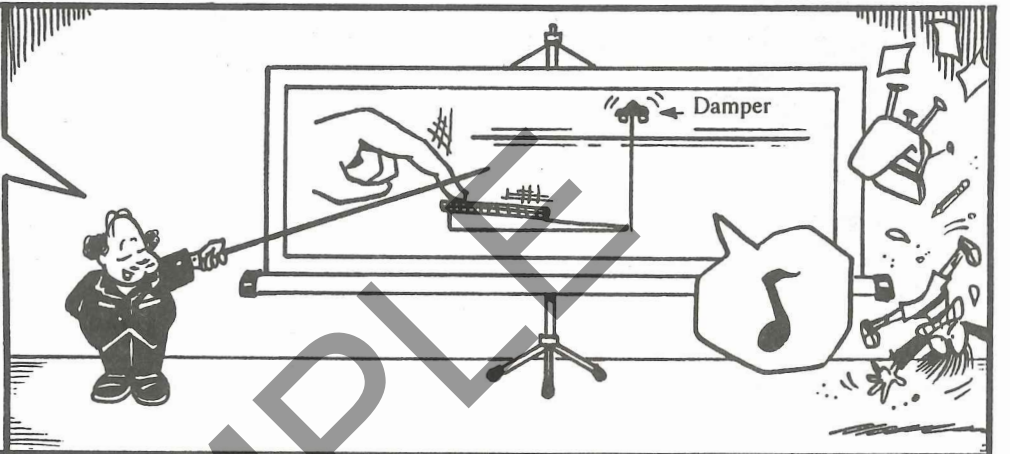
Although the first levers piano students learn to use to make sounds are the piano's keys, the most misunderstood levers are the ones controlled by the feet - **THE PEDALS!**



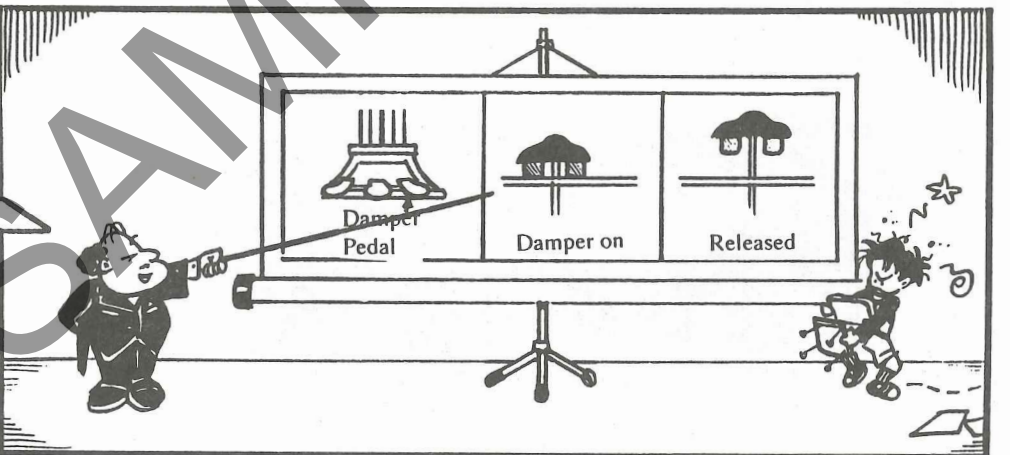
The piano's **dampers** are the piano's sound stoppers. Their main purpose is to mute or dampen the vibrating strings



Each key has its own damper which lifts away from the strings when the key is played. This allows the tone to be heard as long as the key is held down.



The **damper pedal**, controlled by the right foot, releases all the dampers from the strings at the same time, allowing the strings to vibrate freely or in a more controlled manner.



The damper pedal is not a "loud" pedal. The damper pedal enriches the sound by letting all the other strings vibrate with those being played, a sort of echo making device.

