



# 1550. Begin The Beguine

Backgrounds Of S. Radic

The reason for the creation of this "MWP special edition" reached me by email a few days ago, which contained the following: *Dear Mr. Radic, may I ask you a question about a special way of playing? I don't think anyone would know better than you, having played the accordion and organ yourself for many years. Many keyboardists and accordionists don't actually play the organ/accordion-sounding pieces, but play with a kind of suggestion. How does it work? I know sliding off a black key. But many organists/accordionists have their own way of "embellishing" before reaching the target note. How do you do that? As a prime example, I'll send you a YT link to "Begin The Beguine" by "ChromaticPlayer Paul," who is very good at these embellishments!*

So then I took a closer look at "ChromaticPlayer Paul" and listened to it. First of all, I was very amazed at how "active" he is on YouTube - he has recorded countless well-known hits - and all of them in his own special way! The first listening impression is almost "huge": He is very familiar with the operation of the YAMAHA TYROS and really gets a maximum of sound from it. From the time of my music training I still remember the sentence of my music professor: "Please don't exaggerate with the embellishments!" Well, the good Paul obviously didn't have such a music teacher: to put it simply, Paul "exaggerates" with its embellishments.

The original song has 108 bars (form A-A-B-A-C) - Paul recorded 143 bars - of the melody, however, only the A parts in various variations and C coda - he simply left out the B part, the famous minor modulations - yes, the Harmoniegolge is very complicated - but I don't understand it - then keep your hands off it! Here it comes: not one of its numerous decorations is like the other! Just a look at the works of J. S. Bach, for example, could be enough to hear how fine the ornaments are there - or the famous Chopin ornaments, which you often really have to "rehearse"! I wrote down all of Paul's 143 bars - without repeat signs - nothing is repeated - and make Paul's game available to any "decoration-hungry" post-player - in addition, each of my MWP users also gets the original notes of "Begin The Beguine" in a simple piano version as a PDF document - without ornaments but also with the B section! Then he can make his own judgement! Dear Paul, no offense, but such a title would always have to be recorded in its entirety - with fewer A flourishes!



The song Begin the Beguine was composed and written by American Broadway musical composer Cole Porter for the 1935 Broadway musical Jubilee. It became an evergreen and a jazz standard. The pun of the almost identically written and pronounced "begin" and "beguine" refers to the beguine, a Caribbean dance related to rumba, which originated in the 19th century in the Lesser Antilles, which was then part of France, and came to Paris from there, where Cole Porter met him during one of his stays in Europe. In keeping with the great melodic arcs of the Beguine, the song is 108 bars in song form A-A'-B-A"-C-C', with each part being 16 bars long (except C' which is 20 bars and has an 8-bar coda).

The first commercial recording is by the Xavier Cugat Orchestra (with vocals by Don Reid); it was recorded on September 15, 1935 and published by Victor in October 1935. Other early recordings are by Joe Haymes (1935) and Pierre Allier (1938). The title owes its fame mainly to the recording of Artie Shaw and his orchestra (at Bluebird) recorded on July 24, 1938 and released in August 1938, which topped the Billboard charts for a total of 6 weeks. By 1944 the single had sold a million copies. In his wake, many other prominent orchestras also included their own versions in their repertoire, such as Harry James, Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, the Casa Loma Orchestra, Bob Crosby and Ray Conniff, but also singers such as Frank Sinatra (1938) and many others other.

