

MUSIC WORKSHOP: ALL INSTRUMENTS



Today, as we're still in lockdown, I'm basing my workshop on an uplifting piece of music - and the piece I have chosen is a short arrangement of 'The Rejoicing' from 'Music for the Royal Fireworks' by George Frederick Handel.

Hello everyone, I hope you are keeping well. I write to you on a sunny Saturday morning after a session of online teaching. This has been my life for the past six or so weeks since lockdown and it's quite different! Now I'm giving online lessons to my school pupils, arranging times for key-workers' pupils, and still trying to fit in my own pupils. Basically it's just busy. I don't know who coined the phrase "*no rest for the wicked*" but, boy, I must have been very bad in another life! Needless to say, all my expectations of having time to play my Genos for fun and do jobs around the house just haven't materialised. Oh well...

An unexpected upside of the lockdown has been the proliferation of live online concerts by organists, pianists and keyboard players we've been able to enjoy. I've been loving those by Jean Martyn and, as I write, I'm looking forward to watching Daniel Watt in concert this afternoon (as I have no pupils to teach).

One clear message to come out of lockdown is just how important music is in everyone's lives. We've seen this demonstrated on our screens day after day with hundreds, if not thousands, of people producing music online - whether for the sheer joy of making music or for the innumerable health benefits music can offer, not only to those suffering from mental illnesses (for whom music can be a lifeline) but for everyone in the community. It doesn't matter whether we play the music, or dance to it or simply just listen, it is clearly vital to our well being - and I really do hope that the education minister will take this on board and remember it when life goes back to normal!

How did you get on with 'Chat Chat, Talk Talk' from the last magazine? I heard that more than sixty readers downloaded my performance... so did you give it ago? I do hope so. I thought I'd try something short and uplifting this time and the piece I have chosen is a short arrangement of 'The Rejoicing' from Handel's 'Music for the Royal Fireworks'. He composed this in 1749 to mark the end of the War of Austrian Succession and the piece really captures the mood of celebration. Handel lived during what has become known as music's Baroque period which covers the years 1600-1700 or thereabouts. As the musical periods tend to overlap somewhat there are no definitive start and stop dates. Inevitably some composers wrote in the styles of past masters and their music has influences from an earlier period. Anyway, here's a time line to give you a reasonably good guide...



Although George Frideric Handel was born in Germany he became a naturalised British subject in 1727 and spent most of his life in London. As an English late Baroque composer his composing style is strongly influenced by the Italian Baroque composers and the German choral traditions. He composed some of our finest music much of which is frequently used to this day in our celebrations and church services. Okay, that's the history lesson over. This piece would be played 'allegro' which is an Italian term that means fast and lively (120+ crotchet beats to the bar). Go carefully folks... work your fingering out first and start slowly. Build the speed up as you practice.

The Rejoicing

G.F.Handel arr. G. Eccles

1

2

3

5

4

9

13

17

The music has a Key Signature of two sharps (1) which means we are in the key of D major and a Time Signature of 4/4 (2). You will need to work out the notes on Ledger Lines above the treble stave (3), I've only given you a few up to D.

Count the smaller note values carefully - remembering that a dotted quaver and a semiquaver (4) add up to 1 beat. Bear in mind that these are not swung 8th notes as in swing and blues etc. You must give a full three-quarters of the beat to the dotted quaver.

You'll find many examples of this Baroque piece played on You Tube. As for registrations, you might try an organ version - in which case the Free Play 'OrganHymn' style is a good choice with its attendant classical organ voicing in the One Touch Settings. I'll be using clean, higher pitched trumpets with trombone and horns for more of an orchestral setting. Although there are no rhythmic style parts for this piece do remember to keep a pulse please.

Keep safe everyone and, of course, do keep making music!