

Bite size Composition

THEME - Finding Inspiration

When playing at the harp looking for melody ideas we can get into a rut with patterns and shapes that we are quite familiar with, our “go to” ideas. So to help spark some new creativity we can use inspiration from other music. Now this doesn't mean lifting an entire phrase and calling it your own (Slightly illegal and a bit cheeky) but rather finding an element that you like, using it as a launch pad and developing into something of your own.

This idea can apply to any part of your piece, (a chord, a melodic pattern or a texture etc), but today we look at it to help us find a melody ideas to work with.

Exercise - Picking out patterns from pieces you like and incorporating them into your own compositions.

- **Either through score or by ear look/listen for a pattern that you enjoy in an existing piece of music. (if you have something to hand try that or have a go at the two below)**
- **Try and workout what is happening musically in terms of pitch and rhythm, find a way to describe it to yourself. (Example along side the snippets below)**
- **Using the same approach of previous exercises (LH keeping the pulse and key centre, RH playing around with melody ideas) play around with that pattern.**
- **Start by repeating the pattern a few times to establish it under your finger and to your ear, then around with it, moving it up and in pitch, altering the rhythms, or using it as a launch pad to see what your hear should come next.**

Example of this process with the two snippets below in today's video.

O'Carolan - Planxty Crilly.



A descending 3rd with the repeating top note. I like the quaver up beat into it so I will try and use that.

Ailie. Robertson - Lunchtime Boredom.



A descending in step repeating triplet pattern with a 4th at the end

If you want to analyse the snippets further think about what degree of the scale each note is, this will help you transpose it into whatever key you are going to write in.

Extending your musical vocabulary.

At first it requires a conscious effort to learn the pattern, how it feels and sounds, and focusing on that idea when you do the exercise. Eventually what you will find is that it becomes part of your vocabulary for spontaneous speech at the instrument and another word in the bank to call upon when improvising and writing your melodies.