

MOIRA LO BIANCO & COMPOSERS AND SCHOOLS IN CONCERT

Composer Workshop: Classical Chords: Improvisation for Classical Pianist

Cue Sheet for Teachers



Recommended for grades 9 - 12

Workshop Description

In this 2-hour workshop, pianists who are trained in the classical idiom will be challenged to improvise and compose. Students will engage in active improvisation activities through analyzing and reworking rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic elements in existing classical repertoire. By taking the classical repertoire, and interact with it outside its traditional context and performance practices; the workshop will allow students to use classical music as a tool to develop unique identities as musicians.

Instructional Goals

- Listen to, analyze, and describe music.
- Understand music in relation to history and culture.
- Cultivate student creativity.
- Compose and arrange music within specified guidelines.

Course Outline

- Students will each perform a classical composition of their choice, and briefly discuss historical context of the work.
- Analyze each composition by examining rhythm, harmony, and melody.
- Introduce improvisation tools for creating arrangements of classical compositions. Explore concepts of paraphrasing, melodic construction, and freeform improvisation.
- Students are given a passage of a standard classical work to re-compose, the re-compositions can be in the forms of a reinterpretation, variation, or reinvention of the original passage.

Moira Lo Bianco Performance Group

“Moira Lo Bianco has used her impressive classical training as a vehicle for building a new kind of musical expression - she is a “piano explorer”, an inventor and a joyful and exciting improviser. One of Berklee’s finest and most heralded graduates, she brings her intelligence, creativity and wonderful communication skills to everything she does. She is a brilliant pianist and composer with a unique voice.” -- Stephany

Tiernan

www.composersandschools.com

POST-PERFORMANCE IDEAS

- Listen to the following pieces, and identify sections which have the spirit of improvisation: Caprice n. 24 in A minor by Niccolò Paganini, Variations on a Theme of Paganini by Johannes Brahms.
- Listen to 32 Variations on an original Theme in C minor by Ludwig van Beethoven with a score, and note musical elements such as staccato, major/minor, arpeggios, etc. Discuss how these musical elements contribute to the character and mood of each of the variations.
- Take a melody from a standard work, and transform this melody into different characters by composing an original accompaniment. For example: an arpeggio in major mode, played legato, in pianissimo, produces a peaceful character. Students may be split into different groups to work together, each group focusing on a different character.