

Music!

That's right! It's a musical about music!



A musical play by Cenarth Fox
© Copyright Cenarth Fox 1997
ISBN 0 949175 56 0

THIS IS A PREVIEW SCRIPT AND CAN ONLY BE USED FOR PERUSAL PURPOSES. THE COMPLETE PACKAGE INCLUDING THE MUSIC IS AVAILABLE FROM FOX PLAYS

Music! is fully protected by the international laws of copyright and can only be performed after first obtaining written permission from **FOX PLAYS**. See final page for details. Except as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part of this book may be copied by any means without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published by **FOX PLAYS**

www.foxplays.com

Orchestrations and Backing CD

Music! is scored for piano, guitar, bass, percussion, flutes, clarinets, trumpets, trombones and strings plus a few unusual sound-making devices. These band parts are for hire and will give your production a real zing! A marvellous stereo backing-CD is also available with both rehearse and perform versions of the score. All the musical and “other” sounds required are provided.

Production Package

Groups staging a **FOX** play or musical get lots of help. There are free production notes [*set-design, costumes, lighting, props, etc*] and with each musical there are free lyric sheets for chorus members. There are also free activity sheets for your performers with many activities related to *Music!* Your local agent may have colour photos and DVD recordings of previous productions and offers friendly, helpful service.

Reviews of this 'musical' musical first staged in 1997

The kids did an amazing job. Thanks for all your assistance.

Fanling HS Hong Kong

We used Year 5, 6 and 7 students and had a choir of 40 students who remained on stage for the whole show. They enjoyed all of the songs although their favourites were *Classical Chaps* and *Musical Styles*.

Musical Lingo proved to be the most challenging but they mastered it in the end and learnt a lot from it. To make it visually interesting we held up a stave and students moved velcro notes to show melody, long/short notes, harmony, etc. For speed we had students moving at the appropriate tempo. We were all puffed by the time we'd finished *prestissimo!*

Many commented on how well the Choir remembered all of the words, which is an indication of how enjoyable and catchy the songs were. Compared to other productions, I thought *Music!* was great for organizational reasons as each section [scientists, shopper, prehistoric people, etc] could be concentrated on by a small group of students. Each group was able to have a lot of input into their section and then it was just a matter of putting all the sections together, closer towards the performance time using the Narrators and Choir to give the show continuity.

Hence rather than have a few main characters dominate, like most shows, *Music!* gave many students the opportunity to "shine". The local newspaper described *Music!* as great entertainment and the show as a polished performance. We thoroughly enjoyed performing *Music!* and we look forward to hearing of any new productions in the future. **Kadina PS**

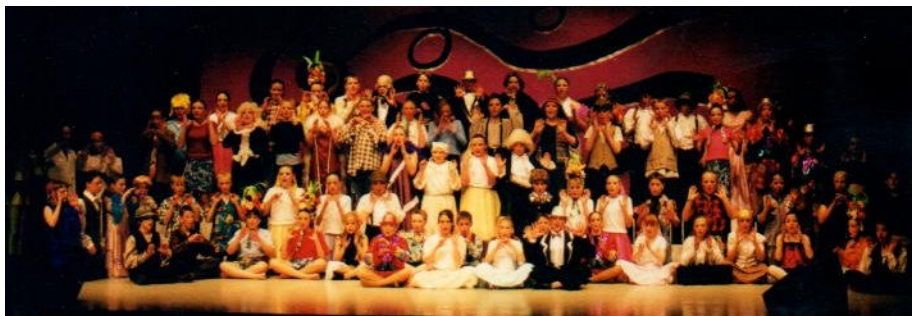
Congratulations to the Year 6 & 7 students who presented *Music!* Senior music students were quite in awe of the talent and polish of the production. *Music!* earned its name with the styles, theory and history of music being examined in a fun and exciting fashion. *Music!* was thoroughly enjoyed by all. The students gave a dazzling display of energy and enthusiasm.

Thank you for the wonderful opportunity to produce your musical *Music!* We were most impressed with your show and so were the audience! We will find it hard to top *Music!* next year. Any suggestions? **Prince Alfred College and Annesley Junior School**

Loads of fun and the final night was just superb. **Grey Street PS**

Possibly the best thing about the play was that the boys were having so much fun, they were full of smiles and laughter. The last performance was to a packed house. Thanks for writing such a terrific play. **Willington School UK**

The girls sang with confidence and the music was enjoyed by all. For *Musical Families* we used a synthesizer to play the sounds of the instrument families, but everyone played their chosen instruments at the end of the piece playing violins, flutes, recorders, sax, clarinet, trumpet and various percussion instruments. We used software and a screen to demonstrate the workings of the ear and this was a great way to link the arts and technology. *Music!* is a great show and we are grateful for all your shows. **Seymour College**



2 *Music!*

Synopsis

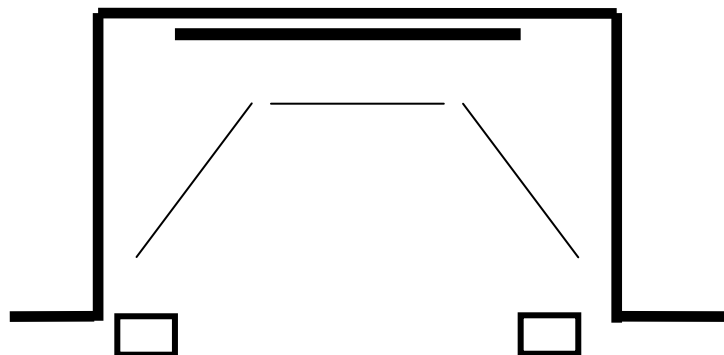
What is music? When and how did it start? How do we hear? This musical about music is many things - part play, musical, choral piece and dance as well as a fun music, history and science lesson. It covers styles of music, composers, the language and elements of music, instruments, notation and advertising. *Music!* is many things about music from the blues to Beethoven, from Mozart to midi. It's a performance about performers. It's a song about songs. It's *Music!*

Costumes and Movement

Consider dividing your company into two sections - principals and choir. The choir [sometimes called the COMPANY] can be static in movement whilst the principals come and go and do all the movement. The space DC needs to be clear for actors, singers and dancers. The choir's costume could be simple and basic topped off with a tee-shirt featuring the logo *Music!*. The many principals wear the appropriate costume for the appropriate scene. Beethoven and pre-historic people are dressed accordingly. More information is provided in the free *Production Notes*.

Set Design

Upstage is a giant backdrop featuring a musical motif and perhaps the logo *Music!* The choir stalls, benches, etc are along the back and on the sides of the performing area. The main area is free for principals. The narrators could stand to either side. Keep plenty of space downstage for movement and plenty of ramps for rapid entrances and exits. This a constantly moving show requiring as much attention to the dozens of entrances and exits as it does to the actual performance. Good lighting is essential.



3 Music!

Characters

NARRATORS 1 and 2 - actors who introduce the many items

SCIENTISTS 1 & 2 - two experts on acoustics

PRE-HISTORIC PEOPLE 1 & 2 - simple folk from the dawn of humankind

MAESTRO - a musical conductor, a music teacher

NOTES [8 in all] numbered 1 to 8

SHOPPER - a supermarket regular who can sing and dance

ORGANISER - a fusspot, a conference organiser

TRUMPET, TROMBONE, FLUTE, CLARINET, VIOLIN, GUITAR, PIANO, ORGAN, DRUM, MARIMBA, ELECTRIC GUITAR, SYNTHESISER - talking instruments

ROCKERS - rock musicians

LATINOS - Latin American musicians

BLUES - one or more singers of the blues

RAGTIMERS - ragtime musicians

BEETHOVEN, BACH, MOZART and TCHAIKOVSKY - themselves

Company members - these can be from the static choir and be used as crowd members in some scenes

Musical Items

1.	Overture	Orchestra
2.	Music!	Company
3.	Audio Adventure	Scientists & Company
4.	Hit That Log	Pre-Historic People
5.	Scales and Arpeggios	Maestro, Notes & Company
6.	Supermarket Song	Shopper
7.	Musical Families	Instruments
8.	Instrumental Instruments	Instruments & Company
9.	Musical Styles	Groups & Company
10.	Classical Chaps	Composers
11.	Musical Lingo	Company
12.	Curtain Calls	Company
13.	Playout	Orchestra



4 Music!

No. 1 Overture

[The OVERTURE is played during which the members of the CHOIR could enter and take their positions. It is not necessary to light this movement. Performers in darkness or semi-darkness. You could instead light the giant backdrop. Overture finishes. Pause. No. 2 MUSIC BEGINS. Immediately PRINCIPALS enter from various directions. Bring lights up slowly. The Choir and Principals sing from bar 5 even if some of the Principals are still arriving]

No. 2 Music!

COMPANY *Celebrate music, celebrate. [3 times]
Music, we love each part of it
Music, the soul and heart of it
Where does it come from? How does it go?
Musical mys'try here on show.
Music, the sound of instrument and song
Hear wonderful sound abound, come sing along.*

ENSEMBLE A *You'll find rhythm with a snazzy, jazzy beat
You'll find melody to make you tap your feet.
You'll find harmony, close harmony so sweet
In this musicale, carnivale treat*

ENSEMBLE B *You'll hear swing, the King and Beethoven beside
You'll hear shows from those whose music's never died
You'll hear facts and acts that should be certified
In this round of sound we say and play with pride.*

COMPANY *Music, we love each part of it ...
Hear wonderful sound abound, come sing along.*

[Song ends. Crossfade lights. Down on P&C (Principals and Choir) and up DR on spot for Narrator 1 who steps into spotlight and speaks. Principals exit quietly in darkness. SCIENTISTS enter in darkness]

NARRATOR Greetings my friends and welcome to *Music!* It's a show with singing, acting, dancing, comedy, drama, information and even a few boring introductions like this. But please consider that imagination costs nothing and the more you use it, the better it becomes. So come and imagine with us. Travel through time, meet the famous and unknown, discover ideas and experience the exciting elements of music. *[No. 3 MUSIC BEGINS]* Now music, speech and the sounds of nature and life are all around. Right now you're listening to my voice. But how? How do we hear? How do sounds get inside our head? Let's begin by listening to a scientific explanation of sound.

5 Music!

No. 3 An Audio Adventure

COMPANY *Take an audio adventure
Snatch the scientific story of sound.
Come and hear about the ear
With some bones that make it clear
There are sound waves moving all around.
Oh be acoustically attentive
If you listen there is so much to gain
Come take an audio adventure
Through the air, into your ear and then your brain.*

[SCIENTISTS use simple, portable props. Perhaps large white cards with basic line drawings. The following speeches are spoken over the music as scientists (as many as you like) display diagrams, props]

S'TIST 1 First a sound is made. This creates a sound wave. Sound travels through normal air at about three hundred metres a second.

S'TIST 2 The sound wave reaches your ear. Each ear has three parts. *[Indicating ear]* This flappy bit on the side of your head is the outer ear.

S'TIST 1 Inside is the middle ear which contains the ear-drum and three tiny bones called the hammer, anvil and stirrup.

S'TIST 2 The vibrations move from the ear-drum through the bones to the inner ear for much fine tuning.

S'TIST 1 The inner ear is very sensitive. Thousands of cells react and send electrical impulses to the brain.

S'TIST 2 Different areas of the brain produce different types of sound such as volume and tone. It's a brilliant piece of human engineering. In fact it's how we hear.

COMPANY *First the sound rocks the air makes the wave
Through the air goes the wave to your brain
Middle ear has a drum and some bones
Inner ear sends impulses to your brain
And that's how we hear what we hear. [Repeat]
Take an audio adventure ...
"It's on the grapevine" ... "You'll get an ear-ful"
Through the air, into your ear then to your brain.*

6 Music!

[Song ends. Crossfade lights. Down on P&C. CHOIR sit, PRINCIPALS exit. NARRATOR 2 steps into spot DL]

N’RATOR 2 Now whilst some may describe science as precise, the study of human behaviour involves a certain amount of guesswork. You see humans existed before the invention of writing and we can’t be absolutely certain how people behaved in what is known as pre-history. *[Slowly bring up lights C.. PRE-HISTORIC PERSON 1 (PHP1) enters miming eating berries. S/He stops about C]* In fact we don’t know just how and when music became part of the culture. More to the point, we don’t know who invented music. All we can do is guess. So let’s draw back the curtain of time and visit our long-lost cousins, the pre-historic people and ask, *how* did music begin?

[Crossfade lights. Down on NARRATOR 2 who exits, bright now on PHP1 who is wrapped in an animal skin, facing front miming the eating of berries. Suddenly a stick-beating sound is heard. PHP1 turns to face the sound. PHP2 (dressed similarly) races in beating two sticks and looking alarmed]

PHP1 Hey! What’s the matter? What’s up?

PHP2 *[Pointing offstage. Puffing]* Wild animal!

PHP1 *[Frightened]* Wild animal! Not that huge, hairy monster with razor sharp teeth?

PHP2 Yes, that’s the one. And it’s down in the valley by the stream.

PHP1 *[Starts to exit]* Well come on, we must warn the others

PHP2 Wait. *[PHP1 stops]* I’ve got this great idea. We can warn them by tapping these sticks. Listen. *[Taps sticks. This is no warning device]*

PHP1 *[Taking the sticks]* They’re not good enough. We need something which creates a much greater velocity thereby causing the air waves to effectively impact on the recipients’ inner ears!

PHP2 *[Bewildered]* Velocity? Inner ear? W W W Who’s Recipient?

PHP1 *[Exasperated]* Oh wake up will you?! We need something they can hear way out there in the forest. *[PHP1 ignores PHP2, looks around].*

PHP2 Hey, why don’t I try yelling? *[PHP2 faces front, cups hands and is about to yell. Stops]* Ah, what do you think I should yell?

PHP1 *[Points to log]* How about that hollow log? *[Moves to log]*

PHP2 *[Shrugs, cups hands and yells]* How about that hollow log?

PHP1 *[Excited]* This is it. Listen. *[Hits hollow log with stick]* I bet they can hear *that* in the forest.

PHP2 Yes but hitting a hollow log doesn’t mean “Watch out, there’s a huge, hairy monster with razor sharp teeth in the neighbourhood”.

PHP1 Good point. Okay, how’s this for a warning of danger?

[Performs rapid hitting on log. Stops]

PHP2 That’s brilliant. I’ve never heard anyone play the log before.

[No. 4 MUSIC BEGINS. Other Pre Historic People enter]

7 Music!

PHP1 Look! It worked. Look what happened when I made that particular sound using that particular rhythm at that particular pitch. Wow!

No. 4 Hit That Log

PRE-H'RIC PEOPLE *Hit that log, perform a basic musical phrase*
Hit that log, create a multicultural phase
Hit that log and start an international craze
Hit that log, hit that log, hit that log.
Toot that flute, perform a basic musical phrase
Toot that flute, create a multicultural phase
Toot that flute and start an international craze
Toot that flute, toot that flute, toot that flute.
Music, music, music. When did the music start?
Music, music, music. Who played the major part?
Music, music, music. Who first discovered art?
Music, music, music. How did the music start?
Shake that seed, perform a basic musical phrase
Shake that seed, create a multicultural phase
Shake that seed and start an international craze
Shake that seed, shake that seed, shake that seed
Twang that twine, perform a basic musical phrase
Twang that twine, create a multicultural phase
Twang that twine and start an international craze
Twang that twine, twang that twine, twang that twine.
Clap those hands, perform a basic musical phrase
Clap those hands, create a multicultural phase
Clap those hands and start an international craze
Clap those hands, clap those hands, clap those hands.
Twang that twine, shake that seed
Toot that flute, oh hit that log,
That's how it all began.

[Song ends. Crossfade lights. PRINCIPALS exit. NARRATOR 1 to spot DR]

NARRATOR 1 *[Puffing a little]* Sorry about that, I'm out of breath. But look, I've got an excuse. You see I'm a professional excuser. I've got an excuse, a *good* excuse, for almost every occasion. And this is why. *[Piano music of scales being practised is heard for a few seconds]* That's right, piano lessons. I used to learn the piano. And boy could I invent excuses for ducking lessons and missing practice. And all because of a simple conflict of interest.

8 Music!

As soon as lessons or practice time came round, I got this tremendous urge to ride my bike or watch TV. But not today. Now I'd be happy to churn out a choon at any time. You see I really love music and being able to play the piano is so satisfying. Except for one thing. *[Quieter, making confession. Looks around]* Deep down inside ... *[No. 5 MUSIC BEGINS. Exasperated. Almost screams as prepares to exit]* I hate scales! *[Immediately the music begins, a group of Company singers enter and lead the Choir in singing]*

No. 5 Scales and Arpeggios

COMPANY *Well every building needs a frame
And every person, they need a name
And music too is just the same
With scales and those arpeggios.
Now every hiker needs a guide
And every bridegroom, he needs a bride
And music too is classified
By scales and those arpeggios.
Scales and arpeggios
Round these the music it grows
Up and down the sound it flows
On scales and those arpeggios.*

[At bar 34 when the "doh ray me ..." singing starts, eight singers known as NOTES fetch a card each and form a line across the stage at DC. They are the eight notes of a scale with lowest note C at the DR end. MAESTRO enters and moves to one side]

COMPANY *Doh ray me fah soh la te doh
Doh te la soh fah me ray doh.*

[At bar 41, 4/4 starts again, MAESTRO gives the NOTES a bit of curry]

MAESTRO Come on, come on. Practice makes perfect. Now I want you to show your note in tune and on time. Nothing sharp or flat and definitely on the beat. Understood?

NOTES Yes, Maestro.

MAESTRO *[Moving to one side]* Right. Follow my beat. *[MAESTRO conducts]*

[At bar 49, everyone, including the NOTES, sing the arpeggios singing numbers - these being the degrees of the scale as shown on the cards. When their note is sung, the appropriate NOTE bobs a little and maybe raises the card a short distance or tilts it one way then the other thus showing the audience the note. Don't cover the face of the singers, the NOTES. They must be heard. Divide your company into two when the two parts begin at bar 65.]

9 Music!

The bobbing on cue will take a bit of practice but if the cardholders are given special lighting, even using reflective paint, the effect could be educational and spectacular. If there is special lighting and reflective cards, they may need to be flicked from horizontal to vertical just when their note is sung]

COMPANY *One, three, five, eight, five, three*
One, three, five, eight, five, three
Two, four, six, eight, six, four
Two, four, six, eight, six, four
Two, four, five, seven, five, four
Two, four, five, seven, five, seven
Eight, five, three, one, three, five, eight
Scales and arpeggios. [3 times]
Scales, scales.

[NOTES prepare for the next section. NOTES 3, 6 and 7 move a little to their right changing tones into semitones. As NOTES re-arrange themselves, MAESTRO addresses audience. This speech begins at bar 75]

MAESTRO *[To audience]* This show has music using tones and semitones found in scales including major and minor. We heard a major scale before. Let's try a minor. Some say minor sounds sad. You judge. Is this a sad sound?

COMPANY *One, three, five, eight, five, three*
One, three, five, eight, five, three
Two, four, six, eight, six, four
Two, four, six, eight, six, four
Two, four, five, seven, five, four
Two, four, five, seven, five, seven
Eight, five, three, one, three, five, eight
Scales and arpeggios. [3 times]
Scales, scales.

[NOTES get rid of their cards and return to original position as at bar 5. More singers could join the eight NOTES. MAESTRO again addresses the audience beginning at bar 117. The COMPANY sings quietly under this speech]

MAESTRO Western music mainly uses major and/or minor scales. Arpeggios are just some notes from a scale played one at a time. But these scales and arpeggios are the frame for our music - even this crummy song!

COMPANY *Scales and arpeggios*
Round these the music it grows
Up and down the sound it flows
On scales and those arpeggios.
Scales and those arpeggios.
Scales and those arpeggios.

10 Music!

[Blackout and MAESTRO and NOTES exit. Crossfade lights bringing up spot for NARRATOR 2 at DL. There are a few bars of playoff music - a Tag - before NARRATOR 2 speaks]

NARRATOR 2 Have you realised that music is everywhere? Radio, television, tapes, discs, sporting events, concerts, dances, cinemas, theatres, department stores, supermarkets, even joggers in the park. But does it really register? I mean, just because music is playing, is anyone listening? Not hearing. Listening. There's a difference. A big difference. Many times we *hear* music, it's there in the background, but that doesn't mean we're actually listening. It's a bit like a parent politely requesting a teenage son or daughter to tidy their room. *[Imitates angry parent]* "Are you *listening* to me?" *[Back to Narrator]* It's a tricky question. Do we *hear* music or *listen* to it? Is there music for hearing and music for listening? *[Shrugs]* Who knows? Who cares? I think this is where wallpaper music was invented. But let's find out. *[MUSIC BEGINS for No. 6]* Let's meet an aural entertainment phoney-ologist. Your weekly shopping may never be the same. *[Crossfade lights. Down on NARRATOR 2 who exits. Use a spot to light an area DC. The rest of the area is dark. Pushing a supermarket trolley, SHOPPER wanders into the spot and sings]*

No. 6 Supermarket Song

SHOPPER

*You drive your car then park it
At the local supermarket
You push your trolley up and down each aisle
Where the advertising patter
Promotes those goods that matter
Today the art of shopping's full of style
And as your trolley's wheels stay in the groove
[Spoken] You hope.
[Sung] An orchestra supports your every move.
They give you Gershwin by the gherkin
They let Lloyd Webber loose above the fruit
And then as you go past the pasta
A tune from some old master
Is played on plaster strings and plaster flute
And by that far jar, they swing Sinatra
It seems the cocoa has the Boston Pops
And then when late at night the packers
To Bacharach stack crackers
The bloody music never stops.*

11 Music!

[SHOPPER dances a soft shoe routine exaggerating movements as if in a world of glorious music when all around are boring groceries. Suddenly a trip to the supermarket takes on a whole new meaning. A team of shopping dancers could join this section. The chorus is then repeated with the COMPANY joining in. They could sing in the dark i.e. don't bring up any extra lighting when they sing.

Song ends. Blackout. Performers exit. Bring up spot for NARRATOR 1]

NARRATOR 1 Musical instruments. Big, small, cheap, expensive, heavy, light, difficult, easy, new, old. You name it, we've got it. In fact we're about to eavesdrop on a very important meeting, a sort of United Nations of musical instruments. Everyone wants their say and everyone's got a complaint.

[Ten INSTRUMENTS enter from various directions and head C into darkened space. They all talk at once. "I hope this is going to work ... This could be a waste of time ... Don't forget to have your say Don't stand for any baloney from the others ..." etc. NARRATOR speaks over the chat]

It's just like your family at meal time. Here they are. What a racket. *[ORGANISER enters and moves to INSTRUMENTS]* Oh and here's the Organiser.

[Crossfade lights. Spot down on NARRATOR 1 who exits. Up on performing area where ORGANISER fusses around INSTRUMENTS. Each actor is one instrument. They could carry a real instrument - obviously not the Piano and the Organ who would have miniature versions thereof - or a plastic or cardboard instrument or simply have their name on their tee or sweat shirt and mime the playing. ORGANISER pushes through and calls for attention]

ORGANISER Thank you, thank you. *[Chatter stops]* I am the organiser of this, the International Instrumental Institution.

INSTRUMENTS *[Loud as one]* I I I!

ORGANISER *[MUSIC BEGINS for No. 7]* Now the first task is to introduce yourselves to the other delegates. One group at a time please. And at the beginning, no anacrusis.

No. 7 A Music Family

TPT & TMB *We're a music family, an instrumental family
We go by the name of brass.*

12 *Music!*

[Instrumental break played by TRUMPET and TROMBONE followed by dialogue over music. INSTRUMENTS spruik to the audience. Don't worry if the music ends before the dialogue finishes. The next singers start and the dialogue is thrown away as the finishing INSTRUMENTS move aside]

TRUMPET Now don't forget our Brass cousins.

TROMBONE Including the beautiful french horn.

TRUMPET The cornet, flugelhorn, tenor horn, alto and baritone horns ...

TROMBONE *[In lower-pitched voice - singing]* And the tuba!

CLT & FLUTE *We're a music family*

An instrumental family

We go by the name of woodwind.

[Instrumental break played by CLARINET and FLUTE followed by dialogue over the music]

CLARINET Don't forget our Woodwind cousins.

FLUTE Including the many recorders and whistles.

CLARINET And the reeds - oboe, bassoons and saxophones.

FLUTE *[In higher-pitched voice - singing]* And the piccolo!

DRUM & MARIMBA *We're a music family*

An instrumental family

We go by the name of percussion.

[Instrumental break played by DRUM and MARIMBA followed by dialogue over the music]

DRUM Don't forget our percussive cousins.

MARIMBA The xylophone, vibraphone and glockenspiel.

DRUM And the Latin sounds - bongos, congas, maracas.

MARIMBA *[a la Spanish]* And castanets! Ole!

VIOLIN & GUITAR *We're a music family*

An instrumental family

We go by the name of strings.

[Instrumental break played by VIOLIN and GUITAR followed by dialogue over the music]

GUITAR Don't forget our String-covered cousins.

VIOLIN The viola, cello and double bass.

GUITAR And the lute and harp and zither.

VIOLIN And what about the banjo and ukulele. Oi!

PIANO & ORGAN *We're a music family*

An instrumental family

We go by the name of keyboards.

13 *Music!*

[Instrumental break played by VIOLIN and GUITAR followed by dialogue over the music]

PIANO Don't forget our keyboard cousins.

ORGAN Including the humble harmonium.

ORGAN Including the humble harmonium.

PIANO And there's the harpsichord and clavichord.

ORGAN *[a la French]* Oui, oui! And even za piano-accordion!

TUTTI *We're a music family
An instrumental family
We go by the name of orchestra.*

[Everyone plays/mimes. MUSIC STOPS. This is bar 87. First part of the song ends and ORGANISER again takes control]

ORGANISER Thank you, thank you. Now the next item on the agenda is the proposal to admit a new family to the International Instrumental Institution.

INSTRUMENTS *[Loud as one]* III!

ORGANISER The application for membership is made on behalf of the electric instruments.

[Immediate protest and general chatting. "No way ... We're not having them ... Acoustic instruments only ... We must maintain our standards" etc. TRUMPET is the first to go public]

TRUMPET No bet, trumpet. We're all acoustic instruments. *[OTHERS agree]*

VIOLIN That's right. What you play is what you hear.

ORGANISER But electric instruments are recognised as legitimate musical instruments.

FLUTE Oh yeah? Says who?

ORGANISER Well, about half the universe. And anyway, some of you acoustic instruments use microphones.

PIANO And just who *are* these electric instruments. What are their names?

ORGANISER Keyboards.

OTHERS *[Shocked]* Keyboards!?

ORGAN *We're* the keyboards.

ORGANISER And guitars.

OTHERS *[More shock]* Guitars?!?

GUITAR *We're* the guitars.

ORGANISER Yes but these keyboards and guitars can't make music by themselves. They depend on amplifiers and loudspeakers.

CLARINET Ha! New fangled, new-age technology. You take my word for it, electric instruments will never last.

DRUM Yeah. Next thing they'll start using computers.

ORGANISER They have already. Years ago. [*OTHERS stunned. MUSIC BEGINS. ELECTRIC GUITAR and SYNTHESISER enter and sing*] Look I think you should at least hear what they have to play.

FLUTE Oh all right. Get it over with. Do your worst.

E/GTR & SYNTH *We're a music family*

An instrumental family

We go by the name of electrics.

[Instrumental break played by ELEC GTR and SYNTH. As soon as the song ends, INSTRUMENTS crowd around the ELECTRIC duo]

GUITAR How do you do that? How do you make all those different sounds?

ELEC-GTR Well with an electric guitar, under each string is a tiny gadget called a pickup. When a string is played, each pickup picks up vibrations which send an electric signal to an amplifier and from the loudspeaker you hear the sound.
[Buzz from INSTRUMENTS]

SYNTH And electric keyboards and synthesisers use electricity to produce all sorts of sounds. A bloke in America called Mr. Hammond invented one of the first electric organs. Have a guess what we call it?

ORGAN The Hammond Organ?

SYNTH Well played, Pipe Organ. [*OTHERS amused*]

CLARINET That's like the saxophone being invented by Mr. Sax.

ORGANISER Indeed it is but right now it's time we voted. All in favour of accepting Electric Instruments as a musical family? [*All INSTRUMENTS raise hand or instrument*] Carried unanimously. So now that's settled, we need to decide which family will provide the President.

[Everyone talks at once. "We will ... We're the best ... We're the oldest ... It's our turn this time ... No it's not, you had a turn last time ..." etc]

TRUMPET Listen! [*Others stop when TPT speaks*] It has to be the Brass. We're indispensable in marches, parades and on all ceremonial occasions.

GUITAR No, it has to be the Strings. We absolutely dominate every symphonic orchestra.

MARIMBA Oh yeah? Well think about Percussion. We're the ones who drive the band.

PIANO Keyboards are the largest and heaviest and we've got a vast number of notes.

FLUTE Yes but the woodwinds are the oldest. People plucked reeds from the river bank thousands of years ago to tootle a tune.

ORGANISER Okay, okay. I hear what you're playing. How about we choose the smartest instrument?

[Derisive laughter. A slanging match starts. Gradually build the tension]

- TROMBONE** Oh that's going to be easy. What's a sackbut?
- VIOLIN** It's an old name for a trombone. What's a tremolo?
- DRUM** The rapid playing of one note. What's an idiophone?
- ORGAN** A generic term for some percussion instruments. Where would you find a flue pipe?
- CLARINET** Up your chimney. No. In a pipe organ. Who was Cab Calloway?
[The tempo and volume of the questions increases]
- SYNTH** What's garage and grunge and gripplety-goo?
- TRUMPET** Spell hemidemisemiquaver?
- GUITAR** Define isometric.
- MARIMBA** What's a crumhorn?
- PIANO** Who wrote souterliedekens?
- FLUTE** How do you play a tlalpanhuehuetl? [pronounced *t'lal-pan-where-wet*]
- OTHERS** A what?
- FLUTE** A tlalpanhuehuetl. It's a Mexican drum.
- OTHERS** Oh.
- ORGANISER** Look, can't you see you're *all* important? You've *all* got a role to play. Why, just now you opposed the electric instruments conveniently forgetting that pipe organs have used electricity to operate fans for ages. Come on. Music is music. Co-operate. Get together and celebrate your wonderful gifts and attributes.
- TROMBONE** What's there to celebrate?
[MUSIC BEGINS for No. 8 and INSTRUMENTS move to position]
- ORGANISER** Why music of course. It's a glorious, uplifting art form. It's fun and freely available. And on millions and millions of occasions, music needs instruments. Can't you hear? *You* are the stars. *You* are the wonderful sources of sound. Come on. Play!
- [ORGANISER exits and. During this number, you could introduce many more instruments. Perhaps they could carry their namesake or maybe a placard on a stick with their name on the placard]*

No. 8 Instrumental Instruments

- COMPANY** *We're instrumental in all you hear
The kind of music you hold so dear
We stir emotion, bring on a tear
We're the music instruments.
We're instrumental at fancy dos
Help drown the sorrows of those who lose
We give a dancer their dancing shoes
We're the music instruments.*

16 Music!

*You can scrape us, you can shake us
You can strike us, you can mike us
You can blow us, put on show us
We're the music instruments.
We're instrumental with young and old
In your apartment, in your household
In every country our work is sold
We're the music instruments.*

[Song ends. Blackout. Performers exit. Bring up spot for NARRATOR 2]

NARRATOR 2 Now I think it's pretty hard to find someone who doesn't like any type of music. I mean there are so many different styles, so many different composers and performers, you'd have to be pretty picky not to like something. So I wonder, what's your favourite style of music? Are you an opera buff? A devotee of the blues? Is your album collection overflowing with classical music? Or maybe you're a heavy metal fan? Maybe you enjoy many styles of music. But whatever your likes and dislikes, here's hoping you'll enjoy something from this small sample of ... *[Bigger voice]* musical styles!

[MUSIC BEGINS for No. 9. Crossfade lights. Down on NARRATOR 2 who exits. UP C as ROCKERS enter and perform. Each group of performers in this song should be dressed according to their style of music, e.g. rockers could be 1950s rockers, country and blues could wear country style gear, Latin in South American outfits, etc. Each group of performers enters/exits quickly as each style is not long. Each group could have 1 to 100 members.

You could re-inforce the title of each style by flashing its name on a huge electronic screen or, if your budget is small, have an easel with a card announcing each style. Something extra for the Narrators to do.

Rather than light the whole performing area, light a restricted space C/DC. The first style can enter the lit area and perform while the next group waits on stage in the darkness ready to pounce. Alternatively you could have two areas - A and B. Light A with the first style therein, then crossfade lights. Down on A allowing first style to exit, up on B where second style have been waiting in the dark]

No. 10 Musical Styles

ROCKERS

*Well it started way back in the fifties
Mixing country with the rhythm 'n blues*

17 Music!

*Great balls of fire, Jerry did inspire
Elvis and his blue suede shoes
And then with lyrics that were simple and easy
On your sleeve wear your heart and soul
There's a beat kinda neat, get you really tapping feet
With the good ole rock 'n roll.
Oh you can't beat rock, you can't beat rock
You can't beat rock 'n roll
No you can't top rock, the old fashioned rock
You can't top rock 'n roll
Oh it's one more time to use a crummy rhyme
The repetition will extol
Oh you can't beat rock, you can't beat rock
You can't beat rock 'n roll*
[ROCKERS exit, LATINOS enter or are lit]

LATINOS

*Way down in South America where the coffee beans grow
They play particular music, Mardi Gras is quite a show
Lots percussion is the fushion, life is never slow
Way down in South America, come amigo, let's go.
Latin American music, bongo and conga they play
Latin American music, go far with cha cha display
Latin American music, maracas Caracas and sway
Latin American music, La Bamba, the Rhumba, ole!*
[LATINOS exit, BLUES enter or are lit]

BLUES

*Southern states, the U S, coloured folk, hard workers
Got to sing the so sad blues
I tell you
Southern states, the U S, coloured folk, hard workers
Got to sing the so sad blues
They even influenced the jazz scene
And early rock 'n roll yahoos
First four bars of every, twelve bar blues, the pattern
Get repeated once and then
I tell you
First four bars of every, twelve bar blues, the pattern
Get repeated once and then
You go and finish with the next line
Before you start it all again.*

[BLUES exit, RAGTIME enter or are lit]

RAGTIME

*I tell you ragtime, the best 've style, Ragtime, the festive style
Syncopated, sweet, bouncy beat. Indeed with
Ragtime, the snazzy style, ragtime, the jazzy style
Will have you tapping your feet. And it was
Joplin who made the rag, Joplin who played the rag
Scotty was a true pioneer.
Come on and tickle those piano keys, tickle those ivories
Ragtime, the style we love to hear.*

[RAGTIMERS exit during TAG. Lights crossfade, up on Narrator 1]

NARRATOR 1

Ah, musical styles. Today the choice, the variety of music is large and growing larger. Teenagers today can listen to a dozen or more types of popular music. And they'll be another new one tomorrow or is that "this afternoon". But hundreds of years ago we didn't have the vast array of styles we hear today. No techno, no *musical instrument digital interface*, no garage or grunge. But not everything has changed. They still needed composers back then and people working in the arts were like they are today - mostly poor and often out of work. *[Shrugs]* Like they say. Everything changes but everything stays the same. Yet right now, thanks to the never-changing suspension of disbelief, we can meet some of the great creators of music still popular today. *[Slowly bring up lights DC and COMPOSERS when announced move into the lit area]* First the benefactor of Baroque music, born in 1685, creator of hundreds of compositions and almost as many children, from Germany, Johann Sebastian Bach. *[BACH enters pushing a pram. He stops DC and fusses over the unseen infant]* Then from Austria, born in 1756 and, arguably the greatest Classical composer, the child prodigy, the extremely talented performer and composer who, today lies buried in an unknown pauper's grave, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. *[MOZART enters on a skateboard, whips around Bach before settling DC only to produce a yo-yo and amuse himself]* Next, from Germany, a giant of Classical and Romantic music, born in 1770 and who, despite a dramatic hearing loss, continued composing, Ludwig Van Beethoven. *[BEETHOVEN enters, crosses to BACH who tells him about the infant. BEETHOVEN is often distracted having to raise his ear-trumpet]* And the final member of our quartet of composers, from Russia, born in 1840 and responsible for some of the world's most popular ballet music, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky. *[TCHAIKOVSKY enters reading a newspaper]* Listeners, music lovers and others, feast your ears on four of the world's greatest composers. *[Lights down on Narrator who exits. COMPOSERS gather DC]*

- TCH'SKY** *[Looks up, waves newspaper]* Hey, comrades, have a look at this! We're in today's newspaper. All four of us in the amusement section.
- BACH** *[Annoyed]* The amusement section! That's outrageous. I've composed and played for kings, cardinals and the crown heads of Europe. I should be on the front page.
- MOZART** What's it say about me? Wolfgang the Wunderkind. Have I got any gigs?
- BEETHOVEN** Oh I like gigs. I wrote some I think. And mazurkas too.
- MOZART** I said gigs not gagues. You know, dates, bookings, concerts, gigs!
- BEETHOVEN** All right, all right. There's no need to shout.
- TCH'SKY** Listen to this. Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos*, Beethoven's *10th Symphony* ...
- BEETHOVEN** Tenth! But I only composed nine symphonies.
- TCH'SKY** Yeah, sorry. I need glasses. , Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* and by yours truly, Tchaikovsky's ballet, *Swan Lake*. We're all being performed this weekend.
- BACH** That's marvellous. Isn't it nice to think people still enjoy our music hundreds of years after we've died?
- BEETHOVEN** Died! Who's died? Did somebody die?
- MOZART** Just so long as my family get the royalties. That's all that matters.
- TCH'SKY** *[Scornful laugh]* You've gotta be joking. Don't you know composers are the *last* to be paid. Booksellers, publishers, managers and, of course, the great impresarios all get paid before us.
- MOZART** Even the performers.
- TCH'SKY** *Especially* the performers. The poor old creators, they can whistle.
- BACH** That may be very true but the main thing is that our children and their children inherit the money owed to us once we've died.
- BEETHOVEN** Cried! Who cried? I didn't hear anyone cry.
- MOZART** Yeah but money isn't everything. What I'd really like is a decent tombstone. Here lies Mozart, the world's greatest composer. *[OTHERS miffed]*
- TCH'SKY** *[Shocked]* The world's greatest! Says who?
- BEETHOVEN** Listen you, I became deaf and *still* wrote masterpieces.
- BACH** And Vivaldi sat up all night copying out my superlative harmonies.
- MOZART** Look it's a joke, fellahs. I was just stirring the pot, pulling your leg, taking the mickey. All right? *[They settle]*
- BEETHOVEN** Who's Mickey? I've never heard of Mickey.
- TCH'SKY** The bottom line is our music is still popular centuries after we wrote it. So take pride, gentlemen. *[MUSIC BEGINS]* We certainly knew how to pen a tune. Our music has stood the test of time.

No. 11 Classical Chaps

SOLO A *History books have space for us*
SOLO B *And music stores a place for us*
A & B *We're famous fellas, each of us a star.*
SOLO C *Movies, shows promote for us*
SOLO D *Performers still emote for us*
C & D *Our deeds make up a ripper repertoire.*
QUARTET *And even though we've long since passed away*
 The tunes we've penned are still performed today.
 We're classical chaps, we're yesterday's heroes
 Who still hang around today
 You'll find in lotsa cities they still play our old ditties
 For which we receive no pay
 And even when alive, twas hard to just survive
 Still true, look at your Broadway
 We're classical chaps, we're yesterday's heroes
 Who still hang around today

[Song includes an amusing softshoe routine. Composers exit, discussing their upcoming gigs as listed in the paper. Crossfade lights. Up on DL as NARRATOR 2 enters and is lit]

NARRATOR 2 Speaking of composers, another who died more recently in 1992 in fact – was a philosopher and composer from America called John Cage. One of his sayings is as follows. “Everything we do is music. And everywhere is the best seat.” Try telling that to a mother with three screaming toddlers. John Cage composed many pieces of different music. In 1952 he wrote a work for piano and the environment. It's called *Four Minutes Thirty Three Seconds* because that's how long it took to perform. But it didn't require your average piano playing skills. The performer lifted the lid of the piano and some four and a half minutes later closed the lid and took a bow. That was it. And we've decided to include this piece by John Cage in our show right now. *[NARRATOR 1 enters and approaches NARRATOR 2]* Ah, perhaps not quite. My colleague appears to have a message. Excuse me. *[The two narrators briefly confer away from microphone. NARRATOR 1 waits. NARRATOR 2 returns to microphone]* Apologies my friends. Unfortunately the pianist is unable to perform John Cage's *Four Minutes and Thirty Three Seconds*. It appears he's mislaid the music. I'll just go and help him. *[NARRATOR 2 exits replaced by NARRATOR 1]*

NARRATOR 1 Did you know that music has many qualities or characteristics? It even has its own language. Performers learn this musical vocabulary. *Staccato, sforzando, semibreve. Modulation, melody, middle C. Rhythm, rubato, rallentando.* And of course jazz musicians learn such important questions as, “Who’s paying for the next round of drinks?” So let’s investigate a little of the language and components of music. Words have meanings. Let’s hear some musical lingo!

[MUSIC BEGINS. Fade lights on NARRATOR who exits. Bring up lights on COMPANY. You could use a giant screen to flash certain words when they are sung about OR you could have various individuals enter with a placard displaying the appropriate word at the appropriate time e.g. melody, harmony, legato, etc. The music is performed according to the lyrics]

No. 11 Musical Lingo

COMPANY

*Mezzo forte, hemiola, modulation.
Semiquaver, hurdy-gurdy, syncopation.
Passionato, tremolando, rallentando.
Enharmonic, pianissimo, accelerando.
The language of music
The lexicon, lingo, the way that we sing, oh
The language of music
In short goes something like this.
A melody is a musical sentence
A succession of notes like this.
A melody is a tune you see
Say hello, melody.
When two or more notes sound together
Simultaneously as one
There is power when these notes sound together
There is music for everyone.
This is harmony, harmony, harmony.
Rhythm is the grouping of notes
You place them in compartments, be they long or
Short, short, short, short, short, short, short ...
The language of music
The lexicon, lingo, the way that we sing, oh
The language of music
In short goes something like this.
Tempo in music means speed
And music can be fast or slow
Or somewhere inbetween.*

*Largo, this is largo
Dignified and very slow.
Then adagio which is also slow, it's adagio.
Next andante, another slowish way
Hear the music play, andante
Yes andante, another slowish way, it's andante.
Allegretto means pretty lively.
Pretty lively is allegretto.
Allegretto means pretty lively.
Pretty lively is allegretto.
Hey presto! Hey presto! Presto it means quick.
Hey presto! Hey presto! Presto it means quick.
But prestissimo, prestissimo, pres 'tiss, 'tiss, 'tiss, 'tissimo
Very quick, very quick. Oh, oh prestissimo.
But prestissimo, prestissimo, pres 'tiss, 'tiss, 'tiss, 'tissimo
Very quick, very quick. Oh, oh prestissimo.
The language of music
The lexicon, lingo, the way that we sing, oh
The language of music
In short goes something like this.
Legato means smooth and connected
The music it just flows along.
Legato, so smooth and connected
'Tis soothing and smoothing this song.
Ah but staccato, it means detached
It's the opposite of legato
Oh yes staccato, it means detached.
We've hatched detached, staccato.
But we must not forget that great sound
Which alas isn't heard much today
No we must not forget that great sound
Listen well for this sound right away.
It's silence. It's silence.
What a restful sound it makes.
It's silence. Hear the silence.
Hear it once again, it's silence.
The language of music
The lexicon, lingo, the way that we sing, oh
The language of music
In short goes something like this.
The language of music
The lexicon, lingo, the way that we sing, oh*

23 Music!

*The language of music
In short goes something like ...
End, fine, the end, fine, the end, fine, the end, fine
Coda, this is the coda, this is the end. The end!*

[Blackout. Some or all of COMPANY exit. All PRINCIPALS exit. Brief pause. As applause dies MUSIC BEGINS. After COMPANY takes their bows, PRINCIPALS enter to take theirs. Many of the cameo roles may not get an individual bow - you decide. Suggested running order is]

1. SCIENTISTS
2. PRE-HISTORIC PEOPLE
3. MAESTRO
4. SHOPPER
5. ORGANISER
6. TRUMPET, TROMBONE, FLUTE, CLARINET, VIOLIN, GUITAR
7. PIANO, ORGAN, DRUM, MARIMBA, ELECTRIC GUITAR, SYNTHESISER
8. ROCKERS
9. LATINOS
10. BLUES
11. RAGTIMERS
12. BEETHOVEN, BACH, MOZART and TCHAIKOVSKY
13. NARRATORS

No. 12 Curtain Calls

COMPANY *Celebrate music, celebrate. [3 times]
Music, we love each part of it
Music, the soul and heart of it
Where does it come from? How does it go?
Musical mys'try here on show.
Music, the sound of instrument and song
Hear wonderful sound abound, come sing along.
Sing a long, sing a long.
Oh take an audio adventure
Snatch the scientific story of sound.
Come and hear about the ear
With some bones that make it clear
There are sound waves moving all around.
Oh be acoustically attentive
If you listen there is much to gain
Come take an audio adventure
Through the air, into your ear and then your brain.*

*The language of music
The lexicon, lingo, the way that we sing, oh
The language of music
In short goes something like this.
The language of music
The lexicon, lingo, the way that we sing, oh
The language of music
In short goes something like ...
End, fine, the end, fine, the end, fine, the end, fine
Coda, this is the coda, this is the end. The end!*

[Blackout. Curtain]

No. 13 Payout

Rehearsal Material and Performing Rights

If you wish to stage *Music!* or any **FOX PLAYS** play or musical, you must first obtain written permission from Fox Plays.

Email

admin@foxplays.com

Telephone

+61 03 9428 9064

Web page

www.foxplays.com

Music

The musical about music



Traralgon PS [Grey St] - September 2000 – Published by FOX PLAYS www.foxplays.com