

Introduction to Improvisation

with Charl du Plessis

Introduction

Introduction to the course and explain what the aims are:

- Improving basic improvisation skills & knowledge of chords
- Expanding your basic pianistic skillset to play with/without notes
- Understanding the composer's compositional material by means of analysis
- How to create your own version with the same material and improvise
- Having fun with music by means of improvisation & creative playing

For this course in improvisation you will need:

- Basic sight reading skills
- Knowledge of basic chord structures (major/minor)
- Basic knowledge of scales and arpeggios
- Listening skills to analyse and imitate by ear
- Self confidence and imagination

After 10 lessons you will be able to:

- Perform Bach Musette in D its original format
- Follow a method how to alter the LH and RH to create your own original material
- Use the Musette by JS Bach to improvise in 3 different styles
- Improvise free in 3 different keys
- Make an introduction and ending
- Create a complete arrangement of a song

Lesson plan overview

Lesson plan overview looking at all the videos in this series

Confidence in music: my personal views and recommendations

How to start the exploration of improvisation

How to practise and doodle with imagination

Lesson 1

Understanding the original score

Analysing basic music elements to use in improvisation later

Mastering the basics: I explain why it is important to be able to play the piece in the original form before departing from it to make your own version with improvisation.

Style and harmonic analysis in the music of Bach: using inherent stylistic concepts to build an improvisation.

Lesson 2

Chords, chord symbols & harmony: where to start?

Basic cadences: V-I, I-V

Altering the harmonic basis to capture its essence: LH basics

Lesson 3

Independence of hands and good coordination explained

Melodic improvisation: how to create a varied RH melody

Using scales for melodic improvisation

Lesson 4

Using arpeggios for melodic improvisation

How to add chord notes to a melody

Experimenting with new LH accompaniment figures

The use of the sustain pedal

Lesson 5

Form in music and improvisation

Repetition & contrast

Silence in music

Making a complete new version of the Bach Minuet

Summary & Question & Answer session

Any questions are answered and candidates can request demonstration videos

Lesson 6

Altering the tempo: how to transform the music as you know it

Altering the key: the basic principles of transposing to a new key

Participants will be required to play the Minuet in 2 new keys.

Altering the time signature: how many styles do you know?

Lesson 7

An introduction to analytical listening to be able to identify the tricks of other pianists

How to imitate yourself and others by using your voice

Exercises for developing ear training and relative pitch

Lesson 8

Incorporating sequences in melodic improvisation

Melodic call & response: how to make questions and answers when improvising

How to make an introduction for your new arrangement

Summary & Question & Answer session

Any questions are answered and candidates can request demonstration videos

Lesson 9

Chord symbols: how to add even more advanced chords to your arrangement and improvisation

How to create an ending for your new arrangement

A basic overview of stock endings

Lesson 10

Combining all the principles incorporated so far.

How to create your final version of an improvisation and arrangement of the original Musette by JS Bach incorporating

- new keys
- new styles
- Your own improvisation

Summary & conclusion

Suggestion for further listening

Suggestion of similar pieces to use for improvisation

How to practise

Introduction to the next course and level of improvisation