

Proms at St Jude's



Fantastic Fanfares

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Introduction

This resource pack is designed for teachers of Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 pupils studying music. Its purpose is to develop musical knowledge of fanfares by listening to and analysing well-known examples from the Classical Western tradition. The fanfare competition is principally aimed to encourage students aged 16 -18 but appropriate entries from younger pupils will be accepted. However, we hope that schools will be able to use the materials as KS3 and KS4 as we recognise that composition is a skill which develops over time. Through these exercises, the students will be encouraged to write their own fanfare and submit it to the Proms at St Jude's Fanfare competition. We hope the winning entry will be performed by a professional orchestra/ensemble/musicians during the Proms at St Jude's festival (Covid and other circumstances permitting).

We are thinking about how we might extend the fanfare competition in future years. How about a running a fanfare competition for Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils in your school in 2022? If there is enough interest we might run a KS3/4 competition and your best 2 or 3 entries could be entered for a main Proms at St Jude's competition. Please let us know what you think.

What is a Fanfare?

A fanfare is a short piece of music played at the beginning of a concert, event, or occasion. Its function is to call the audience's attention to the fact that the event is starting.

Instruments

Since fanfares needed to be loud to attract attention, the most popular and typical instruments for them was, and still is, the trumpet. Due to the shape of its bell, you can always hear *where* a trumpet is coming from. This, and its naturally loud volume, make it a prime candidate for the function of fanfares. Trumpets made of various materials have been around for thousands of years. The Bible mentions the shofar, a trumpet made of a ram's horn. One passage describes the walls of a city being demolished by the very sound of seven of these.



The oldest known metal trumpets date back to Ancient Egypt (c. 1,500 BC). These, which were excavated from Egyptian pharaoh Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922, are made of silver, copper, and gold.



[Here](#) is how they sound (recorded by the BBC in 1939).

The Carnyx was a metal trumpet found in Celtic culture from around 200 BC. It was held vertically, and would have protruded above the heads of marching crowds (for example before battle).



It even makes an appearance in the comic *Asterix and Obelix!*



[Here](#) is how it sounds, and how it is played.

This was the period when the Roman Empire was growing in Europe. The Romans themselves had trumpets—and similar instruments such as the cornu and the buccina—which they used for a variety of purposes, including co-ordinating military action, calling citizens to important meetings, accompanying funerals or processions, and announcing the arrival of the emperor or other important figures. In this relief from Trajan's column, built around 100AD in Rome, Italy, you can clearly make out several cornu, the C-shaped brass instruments being held by soldiers.



By the 16th century in Europe, trumpets looked like this:



During this time, the use of trumpet fanfares were popular for European royalty and their military. Fanfares were used to announce the arrival of rulers or influential people. Another use for them was to lead armies into battle. Trumpets of this era are also called 'natural trumpets' because they have no slides or valves, meaning that they can only play notes belonging to a 'natural' harmonic or overtone series.

The Harmonic Series

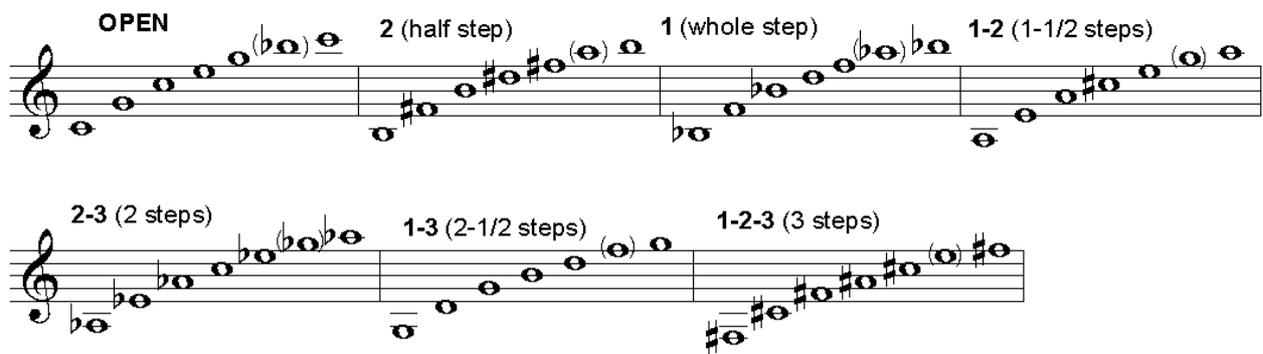
The Harmonic Series is a phenomenon that occurs in the natural world. It can be found with the formula $1 + 1/2 + 1/3 + 1/4 + 1/5...$ When applied to any resonating body, such as a sheet of metal, a string, or a column of air, this sequence produces a specific series of notes. If the first length of string sounded as a bottom C, the series would be as follows:



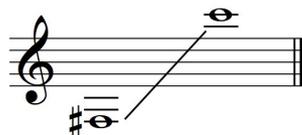
If you buzz air down a tube or pipe, you can produce this series of notes by increasing and decreasing the airflow. Brass instruments use this principle to make sound. In addition to the tube of the natural trumpet, the modern trumpet has three valves, which, when depressed, *increase* the length of the tubing, thus *lowering* the pitch of the note produced by the vibrating air inside.



With valves, modern trumpets can therefore play a total of seven different harmonic series:



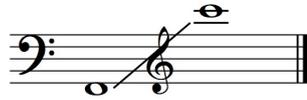
This gives them the following written range, although some trumpeters can go higher than this. With the most common type of trumpet, the B flat trumpet, this will sound a major 2nd lower than written.



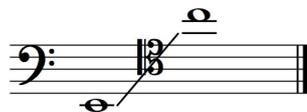
[Here](#) Alison Balsom demonstrates Baroque and modern trumpets.

All brass instruments use this same principle: increasing the length of the tubing with valves or slides to produce additional harmonic series.

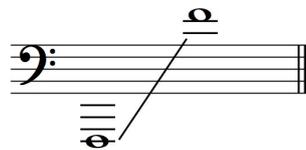
The French Horn in F has the following range (sounding a perfect 5th lower than written). French horns can theoretically go lower than this, but these lower notes are very unstable and should not be used without consulting the individual performer.



The trombone uses a slide instead of valves. All trombones can play the following range, although trombones with a trigger can go lower. The notes sound as written.



Finally, the lowest member of the brass family, the tuba, has the following range. As with the horn and trombone, some models can go lower, but almost all tuba players will be able to play all notes in this range reliably.



This is not an exhaustive list of brass instruments, only the four most common ones employed in orchestral music. Other brass instruments include the Cornet, the E flat horn, and the Euphonium, and are frequently found in brass bands.

[Here](#) is a fantastic online resource for orchestration.

Example 1: *Fanfare For The Common Man* (1942) by Aaron Copland

This is a well-known example of a fanfare. It was written to open each concert in the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra's 1942 season – in the middle of World War II. The title of the piece is inspired by then Vice President Henry A. Wallace's quote proclaiming the dawning of 'the century of the common man'. It is scored for 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, and tam-tam. [Listen to fanfare with score].

Copland bases the fanfare on two main motifs. A motif is a short musical idea with a clear musical identity, whether melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, or any combination of these three.

Motif 1 is an upward flourish made of a 4th followed by a 5th, landing on a long held note:



N.B. 'marc.' = *marcato* = performed with emphasis. *Nobile* = noble.

Copland immediately repeats this motif, using the same two last notes (C, G) and adding a third (F).



Motif 2 then descends back down in a slow and even rhythm. In other words, whilst **Motif 1** moves *upward quickly*, **Motif 2** moves *downward slowly*.



In total, this combination of *motifs* forms a larger *phrase*:



Which he answers with a second phrase, using repetitions and variations of **Motif 1**.



When the opening phrase comes around again at bar 13, Copland this time extends it with developments of **Motif 2** (bar 16).



The rest of the piece uses variations, developments and repetitions of both motifs. These are all simple and useful tools you can use in your own composition.

Pitch

1. Changing direction (eg. going down instead of up, or combinations of these):



2. Changing the *span* or *distance* covered by the motif – the one above covers a 10th, this one covers a 5th:



Rhythm

3. *Diminution*, or making some notes shorter (in this case, the last note of **Motif 1**):



4. *Augmentation*, or making some notes longer (in this case, the first two notes of **Motif 1**, whose length is doubled):



Texture

5. Adding more voices/instruments, to thicken a line:

13

Four staves of music for horns, labeled 'a2'. The first two staves include the dynamics 'f' and 'marc. nobile'. The music consists of a melodic line with a slur and a fermata over the final note.

6. Having groups of instruments alternate with each other (*call and response*, or *antiphony*).

Brass section score with the following parts:

- Hns. in F:** Four staves (1, 3, 2, 4) with dynamics 'f' and 'a2'.
- B \flat Tpts.:** Three staves (1, 2, 3) with dynamics 'f' and 'a2'.
- Tbns.:** Three staves (1, 2, 3) with dynamics 'f' and 'a2'.
- Tuba:** One staff with dynamics 'f' and 'a2'.
- Timp.:** One staff with dynamics 'f' and 'a2'.

The score illustrates antiphony, with different groups of instruments playing alternating melodic lines.

Notice also how Copland uses the percussion section to start and end the fanfare, as well as to mark the end of phrases played by the brass section.

The image shows a musical score for Timp. (Timpani) and Perc. (Percussion). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4. Both parts play a motif starting in the second measure with a forte (f) dynamic. The motif consists of a quarter note followed by an eighth note and a quarter note.

7. Although Copland doesn't do it in this piece, you can also have several parts all moving against each other – *polyphony*.

Harmony

How are the motifs harmonised? While most of the piece stays in B flat major, in bar 41 Copland transposes **Motif 1** (in augmented form) to A flat major, before harmonising the motif in F, A, and finally D major to end the piece.

The image shows a musical score for brass instruments (Horns, Trumpets, Trombones, Tuba) starting at bar 41. The score shows the motif being harmonised in A flat major, F major, A major, and D major. The tempo marking 'allargare' is present. The score is for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th parts of each instrument.

Once you have a motif, a great exercise is to see how many ways you can harmonise it. Major, minor, diatonic, pentatonic, diminished, whole tone and chromatic are all types of harmony that produce different effects or colours. You can use them in any combination, or repeat them to emphasise a particular colour or mood (like Copland, who uses 4ths and 5ths for a lot of his fanfare).

Once you have harmonised your motif in different ways, it should give you some ideas of how you can vary the harmony throughout the piece. For example, is the harmony always major? Or does it start with 2 notes, develop into pentatonic, and end on a big chromatic chord?

Structure

Your fanfare should be around 1-2 minutes long. In other words, you don't have much time! A useful guide is to think in terms of a 4-part structure.

1. **Grab attention** with your main motif.
2. **Create suspense** by introducing different material, transforming the main motif, combine different materials/motifs together.
3. **Build** up to an ending, increase the tension.
4. **End** with a loud climactic point, or a false ending which goes on longer than expected, or peter away to an anti-climax.

Motif Bank

Here are some motifs to get you started. Or you can of course come up with your own motif. Perhaps it will be inspired by a feeling, mood, nature, person, idea?



Lili Boulanger, *Nocturne for Violin and Piano*



Edvard Grieg, *In The Hall Of The Mountain King (from Peer Gynt Suite)*



Clara Schumann, *Liebesfrühling*



Sergei Prokofiev, *Ball Scene (from Romeo and Juliet)*



Maurice Ravel, *Bolero*



Scott Joplin, *Maple Leaf Rag*



Gioachino Rossini, *William Tell Overture*



Miles Davis, *All Blues*



Ralph Vaughan Williams, *The Lark Ascending*



Astor Piazzolla, *Michelangelo '70*

Further listening

Joan Tower, *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman, No. 1* (1987)

Written as something of a response to Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*, Joan Tower's work is based on the same brass instruments as Copland, but adds glockenspiel, marimba, chimes and drums to the percussion section. It is dedicated to the conductor Marin Alsop.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9NXAvqzD2Cw>

Benjamin Britten, *Fanfare for St. Edmundsbury* (1959)

This fanfare was written for a Pageant for Magna Carta in the grounds of St Edmundsbury's Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds. It is scored for 3 trumpets, each of which plays notes in the harmonic series of C, D and F. At the end, the three trumpets come together but stay in their respective keys, creating a polytonal effect (several keys at once). It is a good example of a simple but effective fanfare using just 3 instruments.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hb7QOUun6BQ>

Leos Janáček, *Sokol Fanfare* (from *Sinfonietta*) (1926)

Written for the Sokol Gymnastic Festival, 1926. It was initially called the 'Military Sinfonietta' and dedicated to the Czechoslovak Army, although Janáček later withdrew the 'military' from the title.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBXOoU2kaqs>

John Williams, *Olympic Fanfare and Theme* (1984)

Written for the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whNaZoqcZc>

Anon, *Fanfares for the Holy Roman Empire* (c. 16th century)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKdyqTLRVB8>