

SPSPRC 2018 Music Appreciation Newsletter 1

Playing correct notes and tempo is important, but the true art of piano playing lies in your ear's ability...



The **Russian Pianist Samuel Feinberg** said:

“In order to achieve a beautiful sound, a pianist must have the capacity to control it. But to control this sound, he must also know to hear it. I would also add that a student must not only listen to himself, but also hear himself.”

So now, the question is...
How can I start to HEAR myself?

The answer is rather simple:

Listen to classical music.

You may ask, Why?

When you listen to more arts music, you will be able to easily understand and capture the essence of pieces when the teachers explain styles, such as Baroque Dances or Vienna Waltz. When you listen to Mozart's symphonies, you will familiarise yourself with his musical language such that when you play his work, it will be rooted within you to accurately portray his style. On a broader level, you will not only harvest appreciation but may also emotionally connect with the music – or for the parents, your child will be willing to practise piano without you needing to force them.

“Don't only practise your art, but force your way into its secrets.”

Ludwig Van Beethoven.

Collecting CDs is definitely a hobby for those who have a passion for classical music, but for those who are not die-hard-fans, today's technology will unlock more than enough ways for our parents and students to access these music. Some simple examples include iTunes, YouTube, Spotify etc. It is strongly suggested that parents can together with their child, listen to classical music at home.

Many of our students, especially those studying the *Piano Adventure* course books would have come across music of all different styles:

Jazz, pop, contemporary and of course, classical.

Much of the classical pieces in these books are simplified version of famous pieces' composed for large Orchestras or Operas.

So, let us bring to you the originals of two pieces to endeavour and enjoy:

1. *Shepherd's Song and*
2. *Ode to Joy by Ludwig Van Beethoven.*



Ludwig van Beethoven

(December 1770, Bonn, Germany - 26 March 1827, Vienna, Austria)

About Beethoven...

Beethoven was a German composer and pianist who was a crucial figure in the eras of Romantic and Classical music, and till today remains one of the most famous and influential of all composers.

As a young man, Beethoven studied composition with Joseph Haydn. Unfortunately, by his late 20s, his hearing began to deteriorate and was almost **completely deaf** for the last decade of his life. Non-the-less, some of his most admired works were composed during this time.



Shepherd's Song (Piano Adventures Book 1) is a remarkably joyful work, was composed in 1808. It is the theme in the final (fifth) movement of Symphony No. 6 in F major, in this case representing happy and grateful feelings after the storm. This symphony is also known as the "Pastoral" Symphony and was first performed on the 22nd of December 1808.

Link: <https://youtu.be/HIfEs4jSXQc>

Ode to Joy (Piano Adventures Book 2A) is a part of the famous Final (fourth) Movement of Symphony No. 9 in D minor. It was completed in 1824 and first performed on the 7th of May 1824. (Most people will find this tune very familiar)

Link: <https://youtu.be/ChygZLpJDNE>



As mentioned, both pieces were originally composed as a symphony. Symphony is a usually long musical composition for a Full Orchestra where instruments include String, Woodwind, Brass and Percussion families.

In the following issues, we will talk more about how to hear apart different instruments and music genres of western art music, and later on we can even look into how *Music from the East* gradually evolves and is not heard more and more often in Western Societies.

Stay Tuned!

Other notes:

Please keep checking emails this month as important information regarding lesson times, enrolments and T&C Amendments will be emailed out to parents from SPSPRC Administration.

But in the mean time... HAPPY LISTENING!

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