



# Lambda 2017 Summer Camp Curriculum

*\* Selected topics will be covered based on suitability and relevance to each student\**

*\*This is a proposed all-encompassing guideline for our camp curriculum (from beginner to advanced levels, all inclusive)Microsoft Office User Page 1 17-02-16*

## Music Theory

### What is Music Theory?

Music Theory is the understanding of written music, is a magic language that we can communicate with the composers. It is a set of common principles that we need to follow.

### What content you will learn in the summer camp?

1. Pitch and Notation: note reading and transposition
2. Rhythm and Meter: note and rest values, strong and weak beats, syncopations, upbeat and time signatures
3. Intervals
4. Scales: Major and Minor (natural, harmonic and melodic)
5. Chords and Harmony: root position and inversions,  $V^7$  chord
6. Melody composition
7. Music Terms and Signs
8. Forms

*\*We will follow and use the RCM Theory Syllabus during the summer camp study\**

## Sight Reading and Ear Tests

### Why sight reading is important?

1. Sight reading is a way to improve your “inner ear”, it's a way to know the relationships between different notes and how they sound like.
2. Improves your reading speed; increases rate of learning
3. Makes your practice more efficient
4. Understands the style of a piece within a short period

### **Why Ear Tests are important?**

1. Ear training study develops our musicianship.
2. Helps us recognize and anticipate when we listen to a new piece
3. By learning ear tests, students will:
  - a) play the music by ear
  - b) write down a music by ear
  - c) find mistakes during their practice
  - d) better enjoy and appreciate music

### **What you will learn in the summer camp?**

1. The method of how to cooperate your ear, brain, hands at the same time for sight reading
2. Interval Ear training
3. Games of Sight reading: less pressure, It's all about fun!

*\*We will use the "Four Star Sight Reading and Ear Tests" Series as our textbook in this session. \**

## **Musicality**

### **What is musicality?**

Musicality is a person's knowledge of, sensitivity to and ability for music. The term "Talent" is tenacious, as achievement becomes an observable trait to which one can easily identify. However, it has more to do with methodical teaching, structured deliberate practice and discipline.

Musicality can also be considered as one's inherent "taste or feeling of music". In piano performance, it refers to someone ability in hearing, thinking and playing music from the heart. It also stems from the performer's understanding of music theoretically and emotionally.

### **What are the key components that constitute a sense of "musicality"?**

1. Having a perceptive ear through ear training
2. Proficient sight-reading skills
3. Sense of pitch: perfect pitch or strong relative pitch
4. Expressivity and emotion: passion, intelligence, sensitivity
5. Imagination and personality
6. Secure memorization
7. Balance of music, mind and body
8. Interpretation: Awareness and sensitivity to dynamics, tempo, timing, color, tonal nuances, musical direction, expression terms, articulation, voicing, touch, rubato, ornamentation, phrasing, analysis and deconstructing music, breathing, pedaling and other essential musical elements.

# Musicality and Practice

## 1. Imagination and Personality

- a) For beginners and intermediate students: live demonstration on the piano by the teacher, as well as mutual critique on student performances. Students will be guided to notice problems and choose samples of better performances.
- b) For advanced students: Reflective musicianship will be cultivated, where problems will be identified and students will be guided to examine on possibilities for improvement in terms of articulation, breathing, voicing, dynamics, pedaling and other interpretation aspects.

## 2. Memorization

- a) Comparison: Identifying identical intervals, chords, phrases or marking out musical sections. Identify changes in transposition, modulation, and contrasts.
- b) Familiarity: identify memory slips and refine practice strategies
- c) Developing reliable memory through multiple senses. Developing reliable memorization alternatives rather than relying exclusively kinesthetic memory, which can be dangerous. As when one is hit with a memory blank, the hands freeze and one loses track of the music.
- d) Simplification and reverse memorization: deconstructing pieces into sections to facilitate memory.
- e) Label: Analysis of intervals, chords, cadence, patterns, chromatic melodies with symbols.

## How can we practice effectively and efficiently ?

### 1. “Trace to its source”: Gathering information

- a) Background knowledge of: composer and era
- b) Genre of a piece
- c) Style and characteristics
- d) What is unique purpose of this piece?

### 2. Theoretically

- a) Analyze form and structure
- b) Analyze the chord progressions and cadence, transposition and modulation

### 3. Organization:

- a) Manage practice time: separate your practice time. Ex: 25 mins a session, 5 mins rest and next 25 mins practice
- b) Manage practice content:
  - Numbering your practice sections (could be of different lengths ranging from 1-2 phrases, one section to several pages)
  - Preview the text through sight reading, then working on refinement from the beginning

#### 4. Practice method

- a) Effectively and efficiently = save time
  - First impression is often the enduring impression. Let's ensure that our first impression is correct through learning slowly and carefully.
  - Save time: not run through the piece brainlessly, but practice deliberately and carefully. For example: section-by-section with a clear purpose in mind.
  - Comparison:
    - i. Identify similar passages and isolate them for practice;
    - ii. Focus on the differences, then analyze and compare
  - Mindful and deliberate practice:
    - Attending to technique problems (e.g. rhythm, octaves, fingerings, articulations, pedaling and so on)
  - Memorize a piece at the preliminary stages of learning: try to incorporate the fingerings, dynamics and melodies as one fluid experience during practice
- b) Effectively and efficiently = simplified and elaborated
  - Practice in small groups (e.g. several notes at a time), then expanding to phrases and sections.
  - "Blocking" of patterned grouping, such as arpeggios, broken chords
  - Identifying the melodic line and attending to voicing
  - Focus on each practice section, trouble-shoot for errors, and work on rectify problems rather than repeating them.
  - Repetition through creative and engaging practice: Only repeat when errors have been resolved. This is the time to program correct content into our system. Refine on areas such as voicing, developing evenness through repetition in different rhythmic patterns, variations in dynamics, etc
  - Rhythmic variations: Practice rhythm with different forms: for instance 2,3,4,6,8 notes as a group, with dotted rhythms, with triplets to introduce variations to original rhythm. This promotes dexterity and control.

#### 5. Interpretation:

- a) Dynamics: How to effectively harness power from various parts of the body
- b) Tempo: Graduated tempo increase (e.g. from slow to fast)
- c) Rhythm: different combination of rhythmic practice
  - Deconstructing a phrase into smaller units: half beat, one beat, half measure, two measures, four measures and a whole musical phrase
  - Alternating various rhythms:
    - i. change to dotted rhythm;
    - ii. change value of beats;
    - iii. change articulation
    - iv. Re-organization of groupings through breaking and re-assembling notes between measures.
  - "Reverse practice": practice starting from the end of a phrase (e.g. practice bar 4, then bar 3 to 4, then bars 2 to 4, then bars 1 o 4)

- d) Musical terms of expression: understanding the meaning of terms of essential musical terms in relation to dynamics, tempo indication, musical expressions and more.
- e) Articulation: legato and staccato, tenuto, accent, accents, staccatissimo, accent with tenuto, etc
- f) Voicing:
  - bring out the melody line;
  - Identify the various layers of voices
  - Weight transfer to the finger playing the melodic line
  - Subduing inner voices
- g) Touch: slow touch, direct touch, deeper touch, flat finger touch, vibrato touch, etc
- h) Rubato: understand the meaning of rubato; practice from standard rhythm to rubato
- i) Ornamentation: identify the different ornamentations; slow practice in groups; repetitions; changing fingers
- j) Phrasing: dynamics follow the directions of phrases; how to end a phrase or section; how to connect large leaps
- k) Analysis and deconstructing music: analyze phrasing, simple harmonic and structural analysis, basic form analysis
- l) Breathing: Physical breath and musical breathe to enhance musical expression of phrasing, and provide structural coherence
- m) Pedaling:
  - 1/2, 1/4 pedaling, direct pedaling, flutter pedaling, etc
  - change pedal by measure, harmony, sentence, rests
  - Use of una corda (only when needed)
  - Pedaling adjustments for melody or for harmony
  - Pedaling by ear