

WIGMORE HALL
Learning

SOUND TRAVELS

R E S O U R C E P A C K



KEY STAGE 3 AND 4
SCHOOLS CONCERT
FRIDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2014,
11.00AM

W I G M O R E
H A L L



Produced by
SERIOUS

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NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Sounds Travels is a one-hour concert for Key Stages 3 and 4 students and their teachers. The concert features three of the UK's leading improvising musicians: Kuljit Bhamra (tabla), Andy Sheppard (saxophone) and Aliocha Thevenet (guitar) who will be exploring several different musical cultures and the links between them.

The concert is part of the EFG London Jazz Festival (www.efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk) and is produced in partnership between Wigmore Hall Learning and Serious.

This pack contains background information about the music we'll be exploring in the concert alongside some suggested activities. You might like to use the pack to prepare your class for their visit to Wigmore Hall or you might use it as a follow-up activity afterwards... it's up to you!

You can access the accompanying playlist by visiting:

WWW.SERIOUS.ORG.UK/WIGMORE-HALL-RESOURCES



MEET THE MUSICIAN

A L I O C H A T H E V E N E

COULD YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO US BRIEFLY? HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE MUSIC YOU PLAY?

I'm a French guitarist and composer, but now live in London. I play in a wide range of styles, since my main activity is in session work. Jazz and folk music are the closest to my heart, and Indian music is a permanent source of inspiration. My 'ideal' music would be a meeting point of those three big musical families.

WHEN DID YOU FIRST BEGIN IMPROVISING?

Improvising came right away when I started teaching myself the electric guitar as a teenager. I was into Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, and lots of blues players, and they seemed never to play the same thing twice - I wasn't even really aware it was 'improvising'! So I suppose I was always making up chord progressions and melodies to go with them, even before getting into jazz and classical music more seriously.

WHAT IS IT THAT ATTRACTS YOU SO MUCH ABOUT IMPROVISATION AS A WAY OF MAKING MUSIC?

Improvising is a way to tune into the 'moment'. It gives the opportunity to interact with the musicians you are playing with, and to shape the performance to the atmosphere of the particular room and audience etc. For me it's an idea related to Zen: tune in to the 'here and now', and let go of preconceived ideas.

CONCEPTS OF COLLABORATION AND FUSION SEEM TO BE IMPORTANT TO YOU AND YOUR WORK. COULD YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THIS?

I think in 2014, it's just the way our society is. We experience other cultures on a daily basis. 300 years ago, Bach had to walk for three days to study with Buxtehude, whereas we just have to turn on the computer... This is a great era for people with enquiring minds!

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE A YOUNG MUSICIAN WANTING TO MAKE MUSIC THEIR LIFE?

Use your ears... I mean REALLY use your ears!

IF WE WERE TO GO ONTO YOUR ITUNES ACCOUNT, WHAT WOULD THE MOST RECENTLY PLAYED SONG BE? AND WHAT SONG WOULD HAVE HAD THE MOST PLAYS ?

I'm currently listening to The Band's self-titled album. My most listened-to tune over the past few days would be Taylor Swift and Snow Patrol *The Last Time*.

IMPROVISATION

INTRODUCTION

Improvisation is a process which is common to countless musical cultures across the globe. It would be safe to say that improvisation is a fundamental and almost universal way of making music.

All of these musicians...

- the freestyle rapper
- the Flamenco guitarist (playlist track 1)
- the master drummer in many West African traditions
- the organist in a church on a Sunday morning (playlist track 2)
- the Indian classical musician (playlist track 3)
- the jazz musician (playlist track 4)

... and an almost endless list of others, are all 'making it up as they go along' to some extent.

Think for a moment about what a short list of musical styles this is, and yet how wildly different these styles sound, and you can see some of the power of improvisation as a way of making music.

Improvisation is a skill which crosses conventional language barriers and which is available to everyone from the virtuoso to the complete beginner. And in fact, as a process, it goes without saying that it is not just used in the context of music. Think about other activities, such as:

- stand-up comedy
- parkour
- breakdancing

Indeed, improvisation is essentially what we are doing when we are having a conversation: expressing ourselves in the moment, and reacting to what is going on around us and what other people have to say.

But just in the same way that having a conversation is not a case of saying random words out loud, improvisation is far from a random process. Although we often speak of improvisation as 'making it up as we go along', this shouldn't obscure the fact that many improvisers are highly skilled, and have invested many years of work in developing their ability to express themselves spontaneously through music. The improvising musician must not only develop technical control of his or her instrument, but must also spend time learning the conventions of interacting in an improvised environment.

QUESTION:

ARE THERE ANY OTHER STYLES OF MUSIC THAT INVOLVE IMPROVISATION?
CAN YOU THINK OF OTHER EXAMPLES OF NON-MUSICAL IMPROVISATION?

IMPROVISATION

MAKING IMPROVISATION WORK

As we have said, improvisation is about more than just 'making it up as you go along'. If a group of improvisers were simply to come together and 'just play', the results would probably be quite chaotic. Musical improvisation can sometimes seem like a daunting, obscure or mystical process to people who have not grown up doing it, with common questions being very simply 'what are they doing?' and 'how are they doing that?'

Improvisation can also be difficult to explain, because it is a skill which is developed and refined over time. With a verbal language, there are many rules and conventions in the background: for example, of usage, grammar, pronunciation, spelling, and so on. Awareness and observance of these rules is what makes these languages 'work'. In the same way, part of an improviser's discipline is to learn musical language(s); to become fluent with organising sounds in such a way as to produce coherent results.

You can define improvising as 'instant' or 'spontaneous composing', and on a technical level, improvisers and composers alike both think in terms of the basic building blocks of music: melody, harmony, and rhythm.

Improvisers can try to make their improvisations hang together by agreeing in advance about one or more of these elements of the music:

RHYTHM

A piece may, for example, be based on a repetitive rhythmic cycle, or groove.

In Indian classical music, as we shall see, the **tala** (also written 'tal' or 'taal') is a rhythmic pattern of a certain number of beats, with a strong stress at the beginning (known as the **sam**), which repeats again and again throughout the course of a piece, giving it a rhythmic logic and structure. As well as the strong first beat, the tala may have various weaker stresses within it. So for example, a 14-beat tala may be grouped in this way:

['Sam' = S; accented beat = X; non-accented beat = o]

BEAT NUMBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
ACCENT	S	o	o	X	o	o	o	X	o	o	X	o	o	o

i.e. 14 beats further subdivided into units of 3 + 4 + 3 + 4. Or, to give another example:

BEAT NUMBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
ACCENT	S	o	o	o	o	X	o	X	o	o	X	o	o	o

i.e. 14 beats further subdivided into units of 5 + 2 + 3 + 4.

But within this structure of strong and weak beats, the player still has considerable room for elaboration, and *this* is the improvisation.

A good analogy is the poetic form of a limerick: as we know, a limerick has a fixed scheme of rhythm and rhyme, but within this, we can still compose limericks which tell a whole variety of stories.

IMPROVISATION

HARMONY

Instead, or as well, improvisers may choose to organise their music around shared harmonic patterns. This may be as simple as agreeing to stay in one single harmonic area for a long period of time. The music of James Brown or Fela Kuti often stayed on one chord for the duration of an entire song.

Listen on your playlist to Fela's *No Agreement* (track 5).

Another classic example of a harmonic structure which musicians may agree to use for improvisation is the **twelve bar blues**.

Listen to Pete Johnson's boogie-woogie classic *Dive Bomber* on your playlist (track 6). You can hear the pianist looping the same twelve bars of harmonic information over and over throughout the performance. Here is a diagram to follow as you listen (after his four-bar introduction):

1 C	2 C	3 C	4 C
5 F	6 F	7 C	8 C
9 G	10 G	11 C	12 C

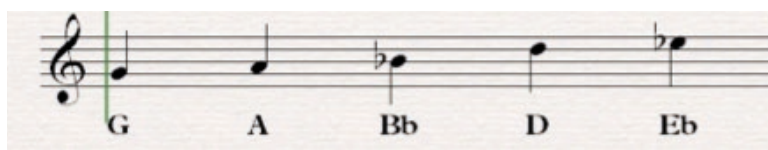
[The numbers represent the bar number within the cycle; the letter is the basic chord being played in that bar]

As we will see, this device of repeating twelve bars of harmonic material over and over is used by Miles Davis in his composition *All Blues*, which you will hear played in the concert.

MELODY

Musicians may also choose to focus their improvisations on a particular group of notes which is often called a 'scale' or 'mode'.

As we will see in more detail below, certain modes have very distinctive 'flavours'. Listen on your playlist to a famous piece of Ethiopian music, *Yekermew Sew* (track 7), which makes heavy use of a favourite Ethiopian mode. This mode is a pentatonic scale (so called because it has five notes) comprised of these pitches:



QUESTION:

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE EMOTIONS CONJURED UP BY THIS MODE?



MEET THE MUSICIAN

A N D Y S H E P P A R D

COULD YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO US BRIEFLY?

I'm a saxophonist, playing jazz and creative music more generally.

CAN YOU REMEMBER ONE ALBUM/SONG/ARTIST/EVENT WHICH INSPIRED YOU TO DEDICATE YOURSELF TO MUSIC?

John Coltrane's *Giant Steps*.

WHAT IS IT THAT ATTRACTS YOU SO MUCH ABOUT IMPROVISATION AS A WAY OF MAKING MUSIC?

What attracts me is that improvisation is such a direct way of making music. The note starts inside you; and then becomes interactive with the other musicians, as well as with the listener.

CONCEPTS OF COLLABORATION AND FUSION SEEM TO BE IMPORTANT TO YOU AND YOUR WORK. COULD YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THIS?

Music is a truly an international language. It's a perfect way for people to communicate on a fundamental level, across cultural, political, religious and ethnic divides. Music represents a way to bring people together, and that seems to me genuinely to be a way to make the world a better place.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE A YOUNG MUSICIAN WANTING TO MAKE MUSIC THEIR LIFE?

What you put in is what you get out.

IF WE WERE TO GO ONTO YOUR ITUNES ACCOUNT, WHAT WOULD THE MOST RECENTLY PLAYED SONG BE?

I Feel Good by James Brown.

WHAT ENTERTAINING PIECE OF TRIVIA COULD YOU SHARE WITH US ABOUT YOUR CAREER?

That I've been in the same room as Eric Clapton and Ringo Starr – at the same time!

BEHIND THE MUSIC

INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC?

When we talk about 'classical' music here, we are talking about a form of music which evolved as an 'art music'. That is to say, it is a performance art: 'music for music's sake', with various formal and technical connotations. 'Art music' is usually distinguished from less formal styles which we might term 'folk' musics.

India is of course a huge country, with many local variations in language, religion, custom and culture. We will concentrate here more on the dominant Hindustani tradition.

BRIEF HISTORY

It is of course incredibly difficult to pinpoint a date of origin for a style of music; but suffice it to say that Indian classical music is ancient. Some say that it evolved out of folk forms some 3,000 years ago.

Like so many other traditions worldwide, the Indian classical tradition is essentially an oral one. Its conventions are not written down for the most part, but instead transmitted through word of mouth. The relationship between teacher (guru) and student (shishya) is really important. It is only in the twentieth century that notation has become a much more important concept in this type of music.

Although the tradition is itself ancient, it has only become well known in the Western world relatively recently. It was in the 1950s, for example, that musicians such as Ravi Shankar and Alla Rakha became well known in the Europe and the USA – partly due to their famous fans, The Beatles.

INSTRUMENTATION

The instrumentation of Indian classical music usually comprises a melody, an accompaniment in the form of a drone, and a rhythmic accompaniment.

MELODY - The classic melody instrument is the **sitar**. This is a plucked stringed instrument, consisting of a long neck (along which the strings run, over frets, similar to those on the fingerboard of a guitar). The neck is fixed to a gourd at one end, which acts as a resonating chamber. Around six or seven strings are plucked by the performer; the remaining strings (around twice as many) are known as 'sympathetic strings'. This means that they are not plucked, but instead, left to resonate when the other strings are played. This resonance is what gives the sitar its characteristic 'shimmering' sound. Listen to *Raga Rageshri Pt. I (Alap)* on your playlist (track 8). This is the unmistakable sound of the sitar.

Although the sitar is probably the most familiar melody instrument of the tradition, other instruments are often used. Listen to *Raga Madhuvanti* on your playlist (track 9) to hear the sound of the **bansuri** - a bamboo flute.

QUESTION:

CAN YOU NAME ANY OTHER MELODY INSTRUMENTS (APART FROM THE SITAR AND THE BANSURI) WHICH ARE USED IN INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC?

BEHIND THE MUSIC

INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC

DRONE ACCOMPANIMENT - Unlike various other traditions, Indian Classical music does not employ chordal harmony. Instead, it uses a **monophonic** device (a line consisting of a single note at a time) – the drone.

The classic drone instrument is the **tanpura**. This looks slightly like a larger, simpler version of the sitar, being a stringed instrument with a long neck, affixed at one end to a resonating chamber. However, the tanpura does not have frets, and has fewer strings. Listen again to *Raag Madhuvanti* – that very first sound you hear is the distinctive sound of the tanpura.

QUESTION:

WHAT TRADITION OF MUSIC FROM WITHIN THE BRITISH ISLES CAN YOU THINK OF WHICH ALSO EMPLOYS A DRONE ACCOMPANIMENT?

RHYTHMIC ACCOMPANIMENT - The final element of an Indian classical ensemble is the percussion. The most common sound is that of the **tabla**. Listen to *Tabla Solo - Jhaptal* on your playlist (track 10).

The tabla is a two-piece drum. The drums are placed side by side on the floor in front of the player. Their main role is to keep time but they frequently interact with the melody line, and may occasionally have short solo passages.

The left hand drum is known as the **bayan**, and the right hand drums the **dayan**. There are many different ways of striking the drums (using different parts of the hand, dampening them or letting them resonate, and so on). The drums are tuned to have very clear pitches giving the tabla its distinctive sound.

QUESTION:

CAN YOU NAME ANOTHER WELL-KNOWN TYPE OF DRUM WHICH IS IN FACT A PAIR OF DRUMS, ONE LARGER, ONE SMALLER?

RAGA AND TALA

Before moving on to consider the structure of an Indian classical performance, there are two crucial ideas to introduce which relate to the melodic and rhythmic content of the music.

RAGA - On page 4, we saw that improvisers often choose to work with a particular set of pitches – a 'scale' or 'mode' – when making music. This idea is particularly crucial in Indian classical music, where the musicians work with a **raga**.

A raga is a scale, which is different ascending from when it descends, and which consists of between five to seven notes in each direction.

Listen on your playlist to the version of *Raga Desh* (track 11). This is based on a raga which ascends with these five notes:



BEHIND THE MUSIC

INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC

... and descends with these seven notes:



The Indian system is similar to the Western classical system insofar as it breaks the octave down into twelve notes (although the precise tunings of these notes are different in the two systems). With twelve notes to choose from, it is unsurprising that there are several hundred ragas in existence.

However, to describe a raga purely in terms of the notes it contains misses a huge part of its significance; because each raga crucially also has special, more symbolic associations. So, for example, a raga may well be used to convey a certain specific **rasa** - that is, a specific mood or feeling. A raga may also be associated with a time of day, or a time of the year.

The Raga Desh, for example, is a 'night time' raga. It is also associated with the monsoon season. *Raag Madhuvanti* on your playlist (track 9), is played between 4pm and 8pm, and is used to express a gentle loving sentiment.

TALA - We introduced the concept of tala on page 3. The tala is, in some respects, the 'groove' in Indian classical music.

On page 3, we saw two examples of talas which were each fourteen beats long. 'Jhoomra' is the name of the tala in which the fourteen beats are grouped as 3+4+3+4; 'dhamar' is the tala in which 14 beats are grouped as 5+2+3+4. But note that the length need not be fourteen beats long. For example, 'tintal' is a sixteen-beat scheme, in which the subdivision is 4+4+4+4; and 'jhaptal' is a ten-beat cycle, divided as 2+3+2+3.

THE STRUCTURE OF A PERFORMANCE

The length and structure of an Indian classical performance is flexible, and may vary depending on various factors, such as the preference of the performers, or whether a singer is involved. However, the following describes one typical course for a performance.

ALAP - The **alap** is the opening section of a performance. It features only the melody instrument and drone (i.e. no percussion). It is in free time - has no regular pulse - and involves the soloist introducing and exploring the raga in a peaceful, improvisatory way. Typically, the musician will move from lower notes up towards higher notes.

GAT - Next comes the **gat**. At this point, the tabla enters, introducing the tala, and the performance moves into a regular pulse. Over the course of the gat, the tempo will gradually increase, as may the rhythmic complexity and ingenuity of the way the tabla player treats the tala. Especially later on in a performance, there may be a considerable amount of interplay between tabla and soloist.

During the gat, the soloist continues to improvise, but will also make use of more fixed, compositional elements within his or her playing.

JHALA - As a performance reaches its conclusion, it may enter a **jhala**. This is a fast-paced section, characterised by the highly virtuosic rhythmic treatment of the tala. The music is by this point at its most playful, exciting, and complex.

TAKE IT AWAY

PART 1

RAGAS

Experiment with making up your own ragas.

Remember:

1. Your raga must have a maximum compass of one octave, but can use any of the twelve notes within that octave
2. It must contain between five and seven notes in each direction
3. It should be different when descending to ascending

Remember too that a raga is associated with a particular mood. Choose a simple emotion to work with: can you make your raga convey this?

Are any notes particularly powerful in changing the mood of the raga?

Does your raga change character when played faster/slower?

Once you can play your raga securely up and down, can you improvise a simple melody using it?

Finally, as we saw, Indian classical music is a largely unwritten tradition. Can you teach a friend your raga without writing anything down?

A portrait of Kuljit Bhamra, a man with dark hair, smiling and wearing a white shirt. The background is a light, textured grey. The title 'MEET THE MUSICIAN' is overlaid in large, bold, black capital letters.

MEET THE MUSICIAN

K U L J I T B H A M R A

COULD YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO US BRIEFLY?

I would describe myself as a producer, composer and educator. My main instrument is tabla, but I also play harmonium and some other instruments. Many people credit me as being one of the pioneers of Bhangra music, and I've produced over 2,000 songs. My recent albums are mostly instrumental collaborations with artists from varying backgrounds and genres.

DO YOU REMEMBER HOW YOU FIRST GOT INTO MAKING YOUR OWN MUSIC? WHEN DID YOU FIRST BEGIN IMPROVISING?

Indian musicians are natural improvisers and as a child aged six, I used to accompany my singer mother on the tabla whilst she sang hymns in the Sikh temples. I have never formally studied music and all my knowledge has come from practical experience.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO DEDICATE YOURSELF TO MUSIC?

As a 'good Indian boy' I was encouraged by my father to follow a 'proper' career! I qualified in Civil Engineering and whilst working in my day job, devoted all my spare time to making records and performing onstage. In 1989 I produced an album that went platinum, and soon I considered a full time career in music. I made the jump and have never looked back!

WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO THE INSTRUMENT YOU PLAY?

I find that playing the tabla for me is a natural form of expression – and I would say, easier than talking. I find that when I play, there is an unhindered flow of energy that seems to bypass my brain whereas when I talk, I usually struggle to find the right words!

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE A YOUNG MUSICIAN WANTING TO MAKE MUSIC THEIR LIFE?

What you put in is what you get out.

If you really feel strongly about making a career in music, first ask yourself why. If the answer is that you'd like to be famous, then think again! I believe that fame should be a by-product and not the goal. If you really love playing music – and friends, family, teachers say that you are good – then by all means go for it!

WHAT ENTERTAINING PIECE OF TRIVIA COULD YOU SHARE WITH US ABOUT YOUR CAREER?

I played with Shakira and the Sugababes a few years ago, and also appeared in *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. I also played percussion in the film *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*... if you listen to the *Oompa Loompa Song*, you'll hear that it's produced in a bhangra style!

BEHIND THE MUSIC

J · A · Z · Z

HISTORY

ORIGINS

Whilst it is difficult to put a date on the birth of a genre, we can say with confidence that jazz is a much younger music than Indian classical music. It was born in the south of the United States of America in the early years of the twentieth century. The first jazz recording was made in 1917, and we are fortunate when studying jazz, in that it has been well documented on recordings over its entire almost 100-year history.

The music is generally acknowledged to have been born in New Orleans, which was a particularly vibrant city at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was a meeting point for many cultures, including those of the United States itself, Africa, the Caribbean, and Europe. Each of these cultures of course had its own musical traditions, and New Orleans served as a big 'melting pot'.

EARLY DAYS

In its early days, jazz was literally a music of the streets. The instruments used were easily portable – cornet/trumpet, clarinet, banjo, trombone – and also those which were easily heard outdoors.

The music was mainly collectively improvised. The musicians would agree upon a very simple chord sequence and melody to use as their starting point, and all play simultaneously, with certain instruments occasionally coming to the fore, and others temporarily sitting more in the background. **Syncopation** was heavily used – that is, the technique of placing rhythmic accents 'off the beat', against the main stresses of the performances basic time signature.

Listen to *Hotter Than That* on your playlist (track 12) – this is a classic example of New Orleans jazz, performed by a legendary trumpeter, Louis Armstrong. Halfway through, you will hear Armstrong **scatting** - singing wordlessly in imitation of an instrument.

QUESTION:

WHAT OTHER INSTRUMENTS CAN YOU HEAR ON THE RECORDING?

BIG BANDS

As time went on, musicians became more interested in developing composition and arrangement within the original improvised framework of the music. Moving into the 1930s, the radio and recording industry were also developing, and more money was beginning to enter the music. This meant that ensembles could grow in size.

By the mid-1930s, the **big band** was to be one of the most commercially popular formations: an ensemble of around sixteen musicians, featuring a rhythm section (usually piano, guitar, double bass, and drums) alongside saxophones, trombones, and trumpets.

Listen to *Jumpin' At The Woodside* by The Count Basie Orchestra (track 13), and notice:

- The greater degree of composition and arrangement than in the early days
- The greater degree of textural variety; soloists begin to be featured
- The use of devices such as **riffs** – repeated motifs, often used to generate excitement, or as a backing to an improviser

Count Basie was one of the great big band leaders; another was Duke Ellington, one of the most famous figures in jazz history.

BEHIND THE MUSIC

J A Z Z

BEBOP

One pattern which emerges repeatedly in musical history is that as soon as something becomes popular, people also start reacting against it. In many respects, big band music was 'feel good' music – it was music for dancing and for enjoying. But society was changing fast in the late 1930s. World War II took many young men out of big bands, and conscripted them into military service (consequently leading to a rise in all-female big bands). Economic pressures meant that big bands were harder and harder to fund. And race was a huge factor in the story; there was a growing feeling amongst the African American musicians that 'their' music had been commercialised by the white establishment.

By the mid 1940s, a style was evolving which was a direct reaction to what the big bands represented. **Bebop** was complex; it was often fast; it was played by small groups; it was the music of the individual again, rather than the ensemble. It re-emphasised improvisation, and cut down on the amount of arrangement and composition. It was a music to express a variety of complex emotions, and not just the 'good times', as seemed sometime to be the case with the big bands.

Listen to *Koko* on your playlist (track 14), by another iconic figure, Charlie Parker.

QUESTION:

THINK ABOUT WAYS THIS PIECE, IN A BEBOP STYLE, DIFFERS FROM THE BIG BAND MUSIC OF COUNT BASIE ET AL.

REACTIONS TO BEBOP

Once again, no sooner had bebop gained more widespread acceptance than musicians and audiences began to react against it and many breakaway styles formed.

Some felt that the complexity and virtuosic had taken the music away from 'the people', and addressed this by fusing bebop with more populist musics such as gospel and blues.

Some felt that the language of bebop was useful, but that it was often too frenetic: they slowed it down, and smoothed out various other corners, and cool jazz was born.

One musician who was at the forefront of looking at alternatives to bebop was Miles Davis – a trumpeter who had worked with Charlie Parker, and appeared on many of his classic recordings. Miles Davis experimented with and pioneered many of the styles that moved away from bebop, and *All Blues*, one of the pieces you'll hear in the concert, can be seen in this context.

His seminal 1959 album *Kind of Blue* experimented with a system for improvisation which was designed in part to be more relaxed and far less frantic than bebop: **modal jazz**. In this type of jazz, the soloist was less concerned with outlining fast moving harmony, instead exploring the colours and moods of a particular mode.

Listen to *So What* on your playlist (track 15). Listen for:

- The more relaxed atmosphere than on *Koko*
- The easier tempo
- The use of only two modes as the basis of the whole piece

BEHIND THE MUSIC

J A Z Z

REVOLUTION

Moving into the 1960s, jazz continued to develop. The new prominence of rock music influenced some musicians; others were galvanised by the Civil Rights struggle. Others began to take advantage of technological innovations, for example in instrument design, amplification, and recording.

Jazz came full circle. Just as it had been born in New Orleans from the fusion of many different styles, so now it came to be fused with countless further styles: Brazilian music, Indian classical music, folk musics, African musics, European classical musics, funk, R&B, and so on.

Listen on your playlist to Herbie Hancock's *Hang Up Your Hang Ups* (track 16).

QUESTION:

WHAT OTHER GENRES DO YOU THINK HAD AN INFLUENCE ON HERBIE HANCOCK WHEN WRITING *HANG UP YOUR HANG UPS*?

JAZZ IN EUROPE

Whilst America was the birthplace of jazz, it travelled very quickly across the globe, spawning many intriguing new takes on the music.

Jazz unsurprisingly has a long history in Europe. From the very earliest days, visiting American musicians were warmly welcomed on this side of the Atlantic; partly due to Europe's more advanced culture of racial equality.

As the musicians travelled, and their recordings were heard more and more widely via the radio and the dissemination of albums, European musicians began to play the music, and inevitably spoke the jazz language with European accents.

One major figure in Europe early on was the Belgian-born guitarist Django Reinhardt, who blended American influences with his own gypsy heritage to create a hugely popular style. Listen to *Nuages* on your playlist (track 17) for an example of this.

As jazz took hold in Europe, European musicians became progressively more comfortable with its possibilities. Whereas Americans had often emphasised their own folk traditions in their jazz, such as the blues, so Europeans emphasised less these American traditions and more their own folk musics.

Listen to *Closing Credits* by John Surman on your playlist (track 18). John Surman is deeply influenced by the English folk music and choral music with which he grew up, as well as the jazz tradition. Listen here for:

- The folk-like melody of the soprano saxophone
- The influence of classical choral music in the background synthesiser writing
- The influence of technology, for instance in the use of multitrack recording (Surman is playing both the soprano saxophone and the bass clarinet on this track)

Nowadays, jazz is not so much an American music as a global music. There are thriving and distinctive musical scenes of musicians in America, Africa, Europe, Asia and Australasia. The scenes are indeed so distinctive that it can even be difficult to see why it is that we refer to them all with the same term, 'jazz'. It might be difficult, but in some respects it is also simple: in almost all cases, we can see the central place that improvisation has.

BEHIND THE MUSIC

J A Z Z

THE STRUCTURE OF PERFORMANCE

Nowadays, the conventions observed by jazz musicians in structuring their performances vary wildly. One of the attractions of the art form is its flexibility, and the willingness of its performers to disregard rules.

However, jazz performance has not always been this flexible, and for a large part of its history, certain structures were often followed. A performance such as *All Blues* follows roughly what might be termed a 'head-solos-head' structure. Listen to Kuljit, Andy and Aliocha following this structure in the concert.

HEAD

The **head** is what jazz musicians call the melody. It is the composed element of a performance, and serves to present to the listener the melodic and harmonic basis for the improvised passages which follow.

When jazz musicians agree to play *All Blues* their improvisation will differ from those on the original Miles Davis recording but they will play the same initial twelve-bar melody (played twice on the original), and the twelve-bar harmonic structure.

SOLOS

Following the head, the instrumentalists will typically take it in turns to improvise on the tune. They will create their own melodies, making them fit with the pre-existing harmonic structure of the tune. While they improvise solos, they are accompanied by the rhythm section. The rhythm section are also improvising, and like the soloists, are seeking at all times to keep to the harmonic structure of the composition. As with Indian classical music, there may be considerable interaction between the melody and accompaniment.

HEAD

In the most conventional jazz structure, once the solos have finished, the ensemble restates the head, before bringing the performance to a conclusion.

TAKE IT AWAY

PART 2

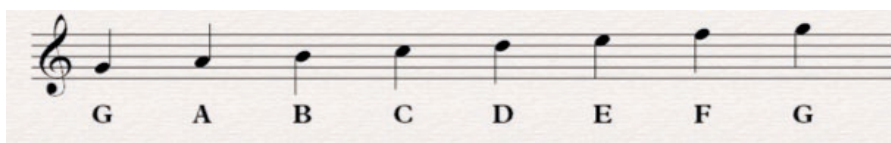
MODAL IMPROVISATION

As we saw, Miles Davis pioneered the use of scales as the basis for improvisation with his album *Kind of Blue*.

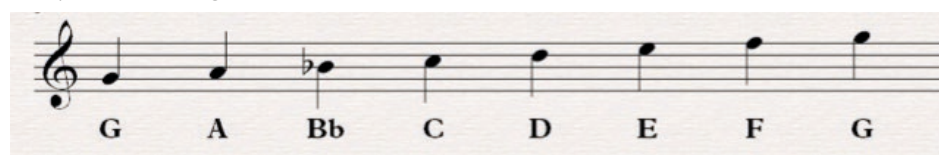
The tune *All Blues* makes use of a number of scales, the first of which is particularly easy to learn. It consists of the white notes on the piano, played from G to G.

On the concert's webpage (see the link at the front of this pack) you will find an audio file called 'All Blues G7'. This is simply a looped version of the first four bars of the composition *All Blues*.

- Find these notes on your instrument (remember to transpose if you don't play an instrument in concert pitch!) Once you are comfortable playing these, try to play them to the rhythm section groove contained in the audio file.

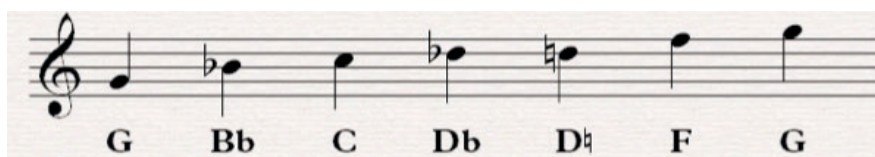


- Think about creating moods with your improvisation. Can you use those same notes and change the character of your performance?
- Try now to change the B natural to a Bb. The new mode is:



Get comfortable playing this mode. Open the audio file 'All Blues Gmin7'. Can you now improvise using this mode, over this accompaniment?

- Reflect on how this mode sounds different to the previous mode. How has the mood changed?
- Return now to the first audio file, 'All Blues G7'. Use this mode, known as a 'blues scale':



What are the characteristics of this new mode?

ABOUT THE EFG LONDON JAZZ FESTIVAL

The EFG London Jazz Festival is the capital's biggest pan-city music festival, taking place for ten days annually in November, which has long been acclaimed for showcasing a heady mix of talent from around the world. Widely acknowledged for delivering world-class artists and emerging stars, in its 22nd year the Festival continues to take jazz to a massive audience, in one of UK's landmark music events. This year's Festival features over 2000 artists from across the UK and abroad, with 350 events and 68 performance spaces right across the city.

The festival is produced by Serious, one of the UK's leading producers and curators of live jazz, international and new music. Serious produces events that range from major concerts, festivals and national and international tours through to learning and participation programmes, conferences and specially commissioned bespoke events. Alongside this exists the registered charity, Serious Trust, which has been established to support the next generation of artists and audiences through our artist development, learning and participation and commissioning programmes.

We align our work as music producers with a commitment to learning and participation at every level, offering audiences the opportunity to take an active part and to deepen their understanding of the variety of musical styles and cultures Serious presents. We aim to bring professional artists and the wider community together, providing inspiration through music for everyone involved.

Acting on the belief that music is a powerful way to engage with people, we encourage and enable attendance at our events by all sections of the community, including those who are often marginalised or excluded and those who would not normally associate themselves with music and the arts.

For further details about Serious' learning programme contact us:

020 7324 1880

learning@serious.org.uk

<http://www.serious.org.uk/about/learning-participation>



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ABOUT WIGMORE HALL

Europe's leading venue for chamber music and song, Wigmore Hall currently presents over 400 concerts a year in addition to 250 education events. Many of the Hall's concerts are recorded for broadcast on BBC Radio 3, including a live broadcast every Monday lunchtime.

Wigmore Hall is renowned for its excellent acoustics and intimate atmosphere. It has just 550 seats compared with nearly 6,000 at the Royal Albert Hall. The size of the Hall makes it ideal for singers and small groups of players. These are ensembles that would have originally been heard in people's living rooms!

Wigmore Hall was built in 1901 and is a beautiful example of Renaissance-style architecture and many original characteristics remain - gas lights are still lit for every concert. Wigmore Hall's auditorium features a cupola above the stage with a beautiful mural depicting the 'Soul of Music'.

Wigmore Hall Learning provides access to chamber music and song through innovative creative programmes, online resources and events. We invite a broad audience to get involved in music-making of the highest standard, particularly focusing on those who may be excluded from regular arts provision. We make connections through projects and partnerships, using music to inspire people, to explore opportunities and to enhance learning and development.



For further details about Wigmore Hall Learning contact us:
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