

## Third Floor - Full of Facts

Derek Hasted's Guitar Ensemble School

[www.derek-hasted.co.uk](http://www.derek-hasted.co.uk)

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### Rehearsal Session 1 - second part

Come to a Rehearsal and see what's involved

#### Rehearsal Plan

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- *Come in, sit down and get some music*
- *The purpose of this Rehearsal*
- *Overcoming the language barrier*
- *Today we're studying Bach...*
- *About the general details*
- *Our first run-through*

Coffee break

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This practical session © Derek Hasted 1998 - please enjoy!

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I hope you enjoyed your coffee break at the end of [Part One](#) of this session!

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#### From Notes to Music

Once we can get through the piece, together, from start to finish, surely it's just a matter of time before the music gets better and better?

Growl! That's as near as you are going to get to seeing me lose my temper, because it's now that the real *work* begins. Actually, it's now that the real *fun* begins too.

This is where we turn notes into music.

This is where we turn from being guitarists to being musicians.

This is where we see the wood and not the trees.

This is why we're playing in the Ensemble to start with!

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#### Some matters of interpretation

I jokingly included that mouthful phrase "Where am I coming from?" when I explained how I put the arrangement together. Well, now we're playing it, this is the "Where are you going with it?" section, where I hope I can help you *make* something of the piece.

Some of these points will be beyond the novice player. That's OK - they are secondary to the joy of playing the notes, of hearing a big sound - at least to start with.

But these same points are the ones which the more experienced player ought to study in detail, as they are the way to add the gloss, the style and flair which makes this piece sound so very effective.

- Points for all the players
  - I've already mentioned the dynamics. Support these with tone changes too, but do make sure that *everyone* does them!
  - The accents in Bar 14 and onwards are hard for a Guitarist to do. I'm looking for a "push" to these notes that a simple increase

in volume won't give. I don't want a thin, scratchy note, pulled from an unwilling guitar. What I'd like is a note which seems to have more sustain and power, and a rich and considered rest stroke can give the illusion of more sustain. If you can *feel* the accents, your guitars will respond. The writing will help - all inner movement stops here, and that helps the sustain. In part two, only the first quaver is accented. The remainder need to trip out lightly - they are an accompaniment, a decoration, not a counter melody.

- Under the three beat notes in the tune, the inner parts keep moving, but make this movement very gentle - it's a preface to the start of the next phrase, not a part of it.
- The final phrase has a slightly more intricate harmony line. If you drop the speed a little to make space for it, the majestic feel I wrote of will be enhanced.
- Be aware - many players speed up when playing quavers. You don't know you are doing it, and so in a solo, you won't know you've done it. It may not show much at all. In an Ensemble, you'll get out of step. Listen to the other players, and keep in with the pulse.
- Points for individual part players
  - Whichever part you play, if you have the musical skill, take the opening phrase in the Second Position, (taking the C on string 3 fret 4) so that all the open strings disappear. The mellow sound here can be contrasted with a First Position repeat which has open strings for extra "tang" to the louder second time.
  - Part One :
    - You'll need to consider whether your technical abilities enable you to slur the quavers. I have a very simple rule of thumb which says that the result of slurring must be
      - a) more pleasant to the ear than individual pluckings
      - b) consistent throughout the piece
 or I don't recommend it. Apply that rule and decide for yourself.
    - Go up to the Seventh Position in bar 14. In bar 15, resist the temptation to use the Open E - its tone will contrast too much with the other notes.
    - In bar 26, if you can manage it, try the fourth position, so you can add lots of vibrato to that antepenultimate A
  - Part Two :
    - In Bar 6, try to lighten the first two Gs - almost staccato - and lengthen the last two notes. This will help prevent any heaviness in the parallel quavers.
    - Try to let the height of the part guide you as to its importance. Quaver passages should, in general, rise in intensity and purpose as the notes rise, and die as they fall.
    - Don't let the low C# buzz - this is the most likely note to burp when it shouldn't, as it is a long reach for the left hand.
  - Part Three :
    - Take care over Bar 5 (and many more like it), to ensure that the A does not ring on into the Ds and muddy them. Take the D on fret 5, or damp the A.
    - If you can do it, try bar 18 (and the last note of 17) in the ninth position on string 4 - it will *sing!*
    - In the same bar, bar 20 works well in the Fifth Position, where we can damp the previous E, and use vibrato to add apparent length to these rising notes. A little shuffle of the fingers is needed to reach the C#, so try to avoid a squeak.

Interpretation - well, it's just that. It's how *you* interpret the music. Which gives you the right to ignore all I've said. Or to replace it with your own ideas.

All I ask is two things...

- that you *do* interpret the piece. I'm sorry, just playing the notes is not enough. This is music for real!
- that you make sure that you have a reason for changing to a different interpretation, that you can justify the change, that you can do the change, and that you believe that the change works. And then, you have learned you to interpret the music, rather than play the notes.

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## Your homework

What do you mean you don't want any homework?

Are you seriously going to bring that piece back next time, unpractised, and expect it to be better?

OK, apology accepted. Yes, and I will help you practise.

1. Firstly, we're going to record ourselves playing. As we play the tape back, we're going to follow it through on the score. If you have some greaseproof, or tracing paper, you can lay it over the score, and mark on it any areas where things sound shall we say "unusual". Mind you, that tip is more use for expensive books of music - you can just as easily get a fresh copy of my Bach arrangement off your machine and scribble away to your heart's content.
2. Secondly, we're going to chat over the areas which you've marked, to find out how to improve. I'll need you to tell me where you think they are!
3. And lastly, we're going to take the music and the tape away and spend just a little time each day turning today's performance from a set of notes into a real piece.

I'll see you next time. And I can tell you that your hard work will be rewarded many times over.

That concludes today's Ensemble Rehearsal - Glad you could make it. Bye for now.

Oh - I see you've left me the washing up. Thanks...



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