

# Imagination Tips

There are musicians who look to the internal printed page to explore and express their own music. Find out what you would like to say in music! Music is a universal language, filled with "words" (musical patterns in rhythm or melody) that communicate who we are.

## ***We are the instrument! The harp is our vehicle!***

Close your eyes to go inside and explore what needs to be expressed. We forget music is sound sometimes. We want to look at tuner and get the right note, or look at a string to hear it, or look at a piece of paper with black dots on it to create music. Tune into your inner music. This is a skill to cultivate! What do you want to express? Your song is just as valuable as an O'Carolan or Bach song!

We already improvise in ways we are not aware of in conversations and actions. We have the vocabulary. It takes practice in putting thoughts, feelings and actions into ways that say what we hear in our head and hearts. It comes through practice! The same practice is done with music. This part of listening and learning is the relationship you are building with your inward journey in music.

## **HOW TO USE YOUR IMAGINATION TO MAKE MUSIC**

Quick and easy access to "New Music"

- Turn your sheet music upside down
- Switch keys of a song
- Add sharps or flats to existing song
- If a song is in a major key, turn it into a minor key
- Play a song in a different genre
  - a. play a Celtic song in a classical style
  - b. play a classical song in a jazz style
- Add effects to your songs
  - a. tap on the soundboard for a percussive effect
  - b. run a string or thin strip of paper through your strings
  - c. pluck strings close to the soundboard
  - d. harmonics
- Play musical piece at a faster or slower tempo than normally played
- Play a variation of the main melody - add notes, subtract notes, change the timing etc.

*The man who has no imagination has no wings*  
Muhammad Ali

## **PICK A PERSONA**

Our society places a huge value on the ability to pretend! We pay people millions of dollars to pretend all kinds of things in movies! This next exercise is to **pick someone or something to imitate**. Close your eyes.....get into "character"! Put them behind your harp - how would they play harp? I have tried this with classes and the results are astonishing! People really get outside of their box. It gives students permission to have fun and pretend! You catch your mind off guard !!

Clarissa Pinkola Estes, famous storyteller and author says, "**All you have to do to create, is stand out of the way**. Allow yourself to be free from your own criticisms and judgements about how you will express. Let go of the fear to express and decide to take a journey to experience what happens when you trust the process of letting go". Caroline Myss, popular author and teacher states that "real creativity is based on a solid foundation of knowledge and discipline." Use your knowledge of chords, intervals, scales to improvise your songs.

### **Some suggestions for a Pick the Persona songs:**

cartoon characters - nature - movie figures - musicians, artists or actors  
historical figures - machines, inanimate objects - weather - animals - colors  
create your own sound track for a movie or a book you liked - give each person a "signature sound pattern" - create a story!

When choosing a category, we tap into the child part of ourselves who used to play king of the castle while jumping on a mound of dirt! It is through the action of PLAY that we open ourselves to creativity. Get out of the way and experience magic!

A good example of how play opens doors, is when a NASA engineer came home from work. He had to somehow figure out how to get the Mars Rover to land on the surface. They knew how to create the capsule to carry to land the rover - but how could they land this thing going thousands of miles an hour and not burn up and crash? The engineer went home. He decided to play ball with his young toddler in the backyard. Throwing the ball back and forth, he had a revelation! That's it! That's how we'll get the Mars Rover on the surface! We will put the Rover inside a ball! And they did! Just a few moments at play yields terrific gain for mankind - personally and collectively!

### **PLAY opens the door to creativity!**

*Imagination is more important than knowledge  
Albert Einstein*