

New Blues Notes

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Dear Harp Players –

I'm looking forward to meeting you all and playing with you in Caernarfon! This is a version of New Blues that I wrote for Chamber Ensemble and Harp. It's much simpler than my solo-harp version of "New Blues" – and a lot of fun to play together. Here are just a few notes that I hope will help you:

Printing out the music: If possible, print the music "double sided" starting with the cover page, to print page turns correctly. If you print single-sided, there's no need to print the cover page.

Key / Levers / Pedals: Even though the piece is in Bb, make sure you raise your G(s) to G#. So: Bb Eb G# are your only accidentals and once you set your harp up, there should be NO lever or pedal changes through the whole piece except the note-bend in m. 75.

Count-in: On the playback-mp3 there are two measures of of count-in and you come in on an upbeat, so you'll hear the following beats (but not these words):

One-Two-Three-Four | One-Two-Three And Your In!

In performance we may have a musical introduction rather than a count-in, but we'll rehearse that.

Tempo / Meter: The meter is 12/8 so the metronome beats 4 to every bar -- and every beat is subdivided into 3 (kind of like 4 triplets in each bar).

12-Bar Blues Form: The normal 12-Bar Blues starts at Letter C. Before then, the piece is a kind of modified Blues form. At letter D, you "lay out" (are tacet) for 12 bars (or maybe 24, or 36) -- just like you would in the Blues if players were taking "solos" – if you don't understand this, don't worry – we'll go over it in rehearsal.

Note Bend at m. 75: At Bar 75, there's a "note-bend." We'll work on that in rehearsal. When you practice, there are two ways to do this, and I'll also try to post a video on this page:

1. The way I do it on pedal harp is to push on the string above the nut, to slowly bend the note higher.
2. That can work on lever harp, too, or you can slide the lever from Bb-to-B. That's not quite as effective a bend., but it should be fine

Memorizing: If you can memorize it, great! If not, try to make a one-or-two page "cheatsheet" so you don't need to turn page. There's a LOT of repetition in the piece, to make it easier to learn and memorize!

Doubling / Simplifying: Most of the melody is doubled in octaves. If you're more of a beginner and need to play only one line, that's fine. Don't worry about playing absolutely everything. What's important is to play "with" the ensemble, so even if you play just the first note of the faster runs, it's fine -- more advanced players will play the rest, and your one note will add important emphasis.

The trick is to learn what you *can* play well – even if it's not every single note, thoroughly enjoy playing it, and play it in time with the music. That's the goal of this ensemble!

See you soon! Deborah

p.s. if you have questions, email me at info@HipHarp.com, make sure you tell me what measure your question is about. And I'll try to get back to you as soon as I can (but I'm not always super-fast at responding, so bear with me!).