



VINCE COROZINE MUSIC

SO YOU WANT TO BE A MUSIC ARRANGER?

What Should I Know?

Today's successful music arranger is dedicated, musically skillful, and has the ability to work with a variety of personalities that include producers, business executives, and performers.

Having an in-depth knowledge of music theory, counterpoint, and orchestration is essential for an arranger. He/she must be able to write quickly (meet deadlines) and accurately, with a minimum of written errors.

An arranger should also have the ability to conduct recording sessions, working with both skilled professional and unskilled amateur musicians.

Who Selects the Music?

One of the first things to be considered when accepting a writing assignment is to decide what type of musical group is best suited for the project. Also to be considered is how many and what type of ensemble to use to best obtain the sound that the producer expects. This is usually accomplished through joint meetings between the arranger and producers. Everyone concerned must strike a compromise when musical and budgetary decisions are involved.

For example, a film that takes place during the eighteenth century would most likely use a touch of classical music as written by Haydn or Mozart, and stringed instruments would be the dominant instruments.

Conversely, a film set in an urban, contemporary setting will most likely require the use of percussion, a touch of rap or Latin music, or abrasive-sounding textures in order to reflect the energy and tension of a fast-paced city.

Do Professional Arrangers Continue to Study?

Successful arrangers continue to study scores of the master composers of the major music periods: Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionistic, and Contemporary, including the various styles of jazz.

Today the arranger must be a composer as well as an arranger, in that he/she is often required to compose introductions, interludes, and endings for musical arrangements.

How About the New Music Technology?

Today's arranger must be comfortable with and have a working knowledge of current music software systems such as Sibelius or Finale, as well as sequencers, and MIDI functions. This is of utmost importance since most producers are not trained musicians and often require the arranger to let them hear the arrangement before signing off on a costly budget that includes

renting a recording studio, hiring musicians and other items for music production.

Parting Words

Today's music arranger must be a fine musician, an adequate technician, and part psychologist in order to navigate the waters of the contemporary music scene.

Vince Corozine is the author of: "Arranging Music for the Real World" published by Mel Bay Publishing Company, and teaches twelve music arranging courses online.