

MUSIC THEORY

PREFACE

The title of this 'Music Theory' is enough to send shudders down the spine of even the most brilliant and respected musicians. Unlike language, in which you need to be at a reasonable level to communicate, with music you can play and play well without any music theory whatsoever. Chord shapes, riffs, melodies can be learnt verbatim without knowing names related to them or the musical theory behind them. "So", I hear you shout, "Why do we need it?" and the answer to this is where you want to go on your musical journey.

If you just want to go to an 'Open Mic Night or a Jam Night, friends or family party/function, play on your own in the house, busk in the street and do all instrumentals, then not having any music theory knowledge would not hold you back whatsoever. If you wanted to add your vocals or anyones vocals then you would need a little knowledge of music theory so you could work out Key Signatures. This is to help determine that the song that you play on your instrument is in the same key as the vocalist is singing. Do you want to collaborate with other musicians, join a duo, trio, ensemble/band, orchestra, choir, compose arrange teach, etc. then "Yes" you will need some music theory.

Why do we, even as good musicians have the **FEAR OF THEORY**. Let's face it if we are not doing something on a regular basis then we have the fear of it. Imagine never having to have learnt to read or write, especially with all the nuances in the English Language, and then suddenly having to learn. We could equate learning music theory as learning a different language, which in a sense is what it is. When we do learn a different language it is usually because we visit a country we really like, like so much in fact that we want to be able to converse in the language of the country. If we are serious we will sit with our language audio and phrase books on a regular basis and give learning the language a good go. The same can be said of learning to drive which is a great comparison because it has a theory section. We want to be able to drive that much that we will do the theory till we have crack it and motor theory is as alien to some of us as music theory.

I know that the majority of us love music in all forms as players and listeners, but why do the majority find the music theory a chore and after some valiant attempts give in, and yet we do not give in in driving tests, sometimes resitting on numerous occasions. Is it the fact that we can do music without the theory, unlike the driving where you can't have one without the other. Imagine not be able to do any music of any kind unless you had at least Grade 5 Theory. Is it the musical stigma that many old players hang to that too much theory takes the inventiveness, improvisation, feel away from musicians or is it just plain laziness or all or part of all these things rolled into one.

I think that all knowledge is good and the more you know about something the easier it is to understand. I found that music theory has made me a better musician than I would have been and again that might and probably is not the same for everyone but in what other professions would this conversation be happening. Surgeon/Doctor, Joiner/Carpenter, Bricklayer/Builder the list could go on and on.

More and more institutions of music are asking for music theory to the level of Grade 5 for both work and college/university entry, so don't fear it embrace it and sign up to my online easy to follow music theory class via MUSINC.