

FUNDAMENTALS OF MUSIC

Fundamentals of music refers to the various things that make up music. A performed music is a combination of two or more of different fundamentals of music. Fundamentals of music is also called elements of music. Let us look at the fundamentals of music:

1. Pitch:

This is the height or depth of a musical sound. This is the precise pitch configuration of a musical sound. Every unique musical tone has its own pitch. Some pitches are high while some are low in relationship to one another. To understand this, press down two different keys on the keyboard. They will not give you the same sound. This is because they have different pitches.

2. Melody:

This is a group of musical sounds arranged to produce a tune. When you play the tune of the national anthem on your recorder, you are actually playing its melody. The melody of a song is usually the part of a song you remember more easily. Melody always have a recognizable musical shape.

3. Harmony

This is the simultaneous combination of musical sounds to produce a pleasant effect. Have you seen a choir singing? They usually sing different musical lines but all at the same time. This produces harmony. The soprano in the choir usually sing the melody while the alto, tenor and bass supply the harmony to it. Even in bands, you find lead singer singing and there are back up singer providing harmony.

4. Rhythm:

This is the movement of music in a definite and regular pattern. The rhythm of a piece of music is determined by the arrangement of the beats and pulse in the music. A simple way of understanding how the rhythm of a piece of music flows is by dancing to it. Different songs have different rhythms. This is why they also have unique dance movements that fits them.

5. Texture:

This is how music is felt based on how the music maker combines the musical sound. Some pieces of music are densely packed or thick. Some are very light in effect. Thick music is usually made up of so many parts while light music has fewer parts and layers.

6. Timbre:

This is the characteristic quality of a human voice and musical instrument. Various musical instruments have their own timbres. This is why it is possible to know that someone in another room is playing a violin even when you are not there. You already know the timbre of a violin that's why you could recognize it. Also, our ears can differentiate the timbres of two musical instruments playing at the same time even if we can't see the players performing.

7. Quality:

This refers to how music is expressed or articulated. Music can be expressed in various volume levels, techniques, speed etc.

8. Form:

This is the musical shape, design or structure of a piece of music.

Summary

Fundamentals of music refers to the various things that make up music. Fundamentals of music is also called elements of music. The fundamentals of music include pitch, melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, timbre, quality and form.

Review questions

1. Explain what the fundamentals of music is.
2. List and explain the fundamentals of music.