



Sample A

Note: How to access the music clips referenced

The music clips required for the aural portion of these samples are attached within this document. When viewing the document on Adobe Reader they can be found under the attachments menu, symbolised by a paperclip. Each file is named for the sample it relates to.

If you do not have Adobe Reader, we recommend downloading it for free at the following link:

<https://get.adobe.com/reader/>.



Sample A

Japanese Water Garden – Stephen Goss

The composer of this piece is Stephen Goss and was written in 2007.

Stephen Goss has a central theme of bringing life to time, such as nostalgia and historical references, as well as places, such as landscapes and architecture. Goss takes pre-existing material and creates unusual and interesting pieces that capture the beauty and character of nature in music.

Goss translated the visual serenity of traditional Japanese gardens into the piece, 'Japanese Water Garden', which captures the same feelings of serenity and beauty for the ear - with a consistent legato style of playing throughout the composition. Goss' version of what a Japanese water garden would sound and be played like features crescendos, diminuendos and a campanella finger style, this is an idea of playing a passage which can be played with multiple notes on a single string, or across several strings.

With the composition of 'Japanese Water Garden', this follows along Goss' theme of literal and metaphorical representations of landscape, architecture and sculpture in music.

A few famous classical guitarists include: Fernando Sor, Leo Brouer and Kazuhito Yamashita.

Stephen Goss is a Welsh composer who was born on February 2nd 1964. Goss composes music for orchestral and choral works, chamber music and solo pieces for guitar and other instruments. Orchestras which have performed his music include: The RTE National Symphony Orchestra, BBC Now and the Russian National Orchestra.

'Japanese Water Garden' is a piece written for solo classical guitarists, however I'm sure this piece could be transcribed and played with other instruments. For my practical, I played this piece as a solo classical guitarist.

The most interesting part of this piece for me was from bars 16 to 21, which feature repeats of bars. In these repeated bars, there is definitely a need to express and somewhat exaggerate the mood and dynamics to keep the listeners and the player themselves engaged. The repetition can become quite



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long and boring if there is not enough expression in the feeling and dynamics, so this part was quite interesting to me as I had to keep myself engaged and not be afraid to add a bit of ornamentation when it came to the mood expressed in these bars.

The main feature of this piece the audience should look out for is the 7/8-time signature which gives the piece a sense of being a beat too fast, however this is intentional in its composition. I was unable to nail this tempo down in my playing, as I kept reverting back to a 4/4-time signature. Keeping the correct tempo and time are the main things I need to work on to improve my playing of this piece.

I recommend watching a video of the piece being played correctly in comparison to how I played, so I will link a video on YouTube here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFot3WK4Dww>

My favourite section of this piece is the beginning, up until bar n. The piece starts off mezzo forte and gently flowing in playing. I enjoy pieces like this which start off in a strong way without being overpowering, as I feel this may be quite unexpected. This section returns in the last few lines of music at the end of this piece, which I enjoy, as it ties the whole composition together and brings us to a clear end in the piece.



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TEACHER ANNOTATIONS USING THE FEATURES OF QUALITY

The annotations capture observations by the teacher, using the features of quality, with a view to establishing the level of achievement this work reflects. The annotations and judgments were confirmed by a Quality Assurance group, consisting of practising teachers and representatives of the NCCA, the Inspectorate, the State Exams Commission and the Junior Cycle for Teachers support service.

TEACHER ANNOTATIONS

Piece 1: Swing Swang Lane

Format: Audio

Piece 2: Japanese Garden

Format: Written programme Note

This programme note offers many relevant, concise and highly interesting details for both pieces that offers the listener some detailed insights and excellent signposts and supports. An example of this are the references to the 'campanella' fingering style for guitarists in the 'Japanese Water Garden' note, and mentions of jazz quavers in 'Swing Swang'.

A very high level of detail with regards the context and purpose of the compositions is provided and It is clear that there is a very high level of initiative in the research undertaken with regards to the biographical details of both composers. The note helps to evoke the sense of what the composers are seeking to achieve through their compositions. This is done in a very clear way, with some very interesting observations on how Goss creates the image and soundscape of a Japanese water garden, and how Clarke is replicating the jazz style of the 1940's for 'Swing Swang'.

One way this could be improved would be an expansion of what a jazz style of the 1940's would entail, and how this is exemplified in 'Swing Swang'.

OVERALL JUDGEMENT:



Exceptional