The Jazz Lever Harp Companion

Exciting Jazz repertoire for the lever harp

amanda whiting

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Exciting Jazz repertoire for lever harp.

Amanda Whiting

Amanda started classical harp at the age of 6 and at 16 was awarded a specialist scholarship to Wells Cathedral School. She gained her BMus with Caryl Thomas at Cardiff University and her Masters in Jazz at The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama. She has since become a freelance harpist all over the world; from recitals in London's Southbank to Jazz festivals in Hamburg, Johannesburg and Belgium, to name a few.

As a teacher, Amanda is the Jazz harp specialist at Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. In 2020 she was awarded her own studio on the Harp Column Academy, teaching jazz around the world.

As a composer of jazz harp music, her accolades include the Trinity Harp syllabus (2020-2023) which contains 22 of her compositions.

2020 has also seen Amanda signed to Jazzman Records as a jazz artist, releasing two albums in September 2020 and February 2021.

About this book

This book has been written with the intention of making jazz fun and accessible on the harp. We have kept lever changes to an absolute minimum, allowing you to concentrate on the rhythm and improvising.

Performance Notes:

- Tuning for lever harp is in E♭
- Lever changes are diamond headed on the actual string to be changed.
- 'Lead sheet' style chords have been included on most pieces to allow you to improvise.
- Dynamics and fingering have been left open to interpretation.

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The Jazz Lever Harp Companion

Taken from the Pedal Sliders library –
a companion for all levels

Contents	*Page*
Cheeky Monkey	5
Pensive	6
That Time of Year	7
A Little Blues	8
A Harmonic Waltz	10
Sombre Samba	12
Boogie Blues	16
All Summer Long	18
Blue Skies	21
Feet Up	23
The Winter Trees	26
Thinking	30
Wibbly Waltz	32
Strut Your Stuff Blues	34
Jingle Bells	36
Silent Night	38
Christmas Morning	40

foreword

Advice on improvising

It isn't difficult to improvise; you can play anything you like. Suggested notes for improvising are given in the boxes at the beginning of each solo section. Sometimes, having so much to choose from can make it more difficult.

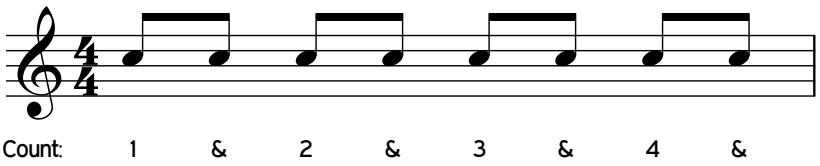
Tips:

- Pick small motifs or shapes. Listen to the original tune for ideas. Maybe start with one note in the same rhythm as the tune and then slowly add another to develop the idea.
- Keep the left hand steady and in tempo. Count and tap your foot. This is often difficult to do when your brain is concentrating on improvising in the right hand. Practise just the left hand and slowly add to it with your right hand ideas.
- Try the 3 statement idea to help improve phrasing. eg make a statement in the first bar, repeat it in the second, then repeat again in the third and make it longer so it crosses in to the fourth bar.

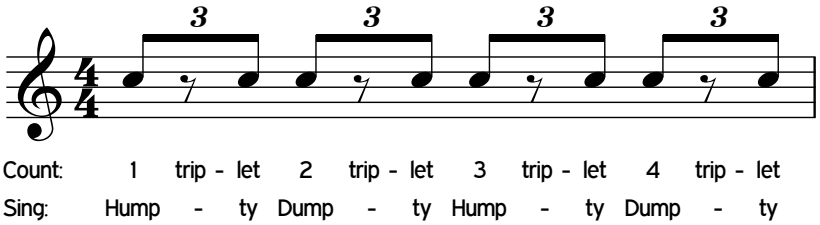
Advice on rhythm

In jazz, we simply write the music the same as in classical BUT the feel and performance is very different. When you see *Swing*, this means that two quavers should sound similar to a triplet where the first two notes of the triplet are tied together, giving a long-short feel or *Humpty-Dumpty* rhythm.

So, in a bar of 4/4 the rhythm will be written as:



But will be played as:

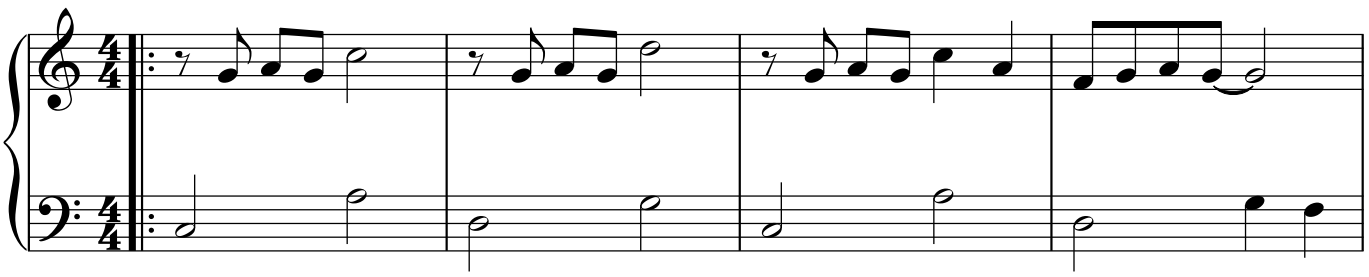


Just have fun and see what you are able to create. Sing out loud and be proud!

Cheeky Monkey

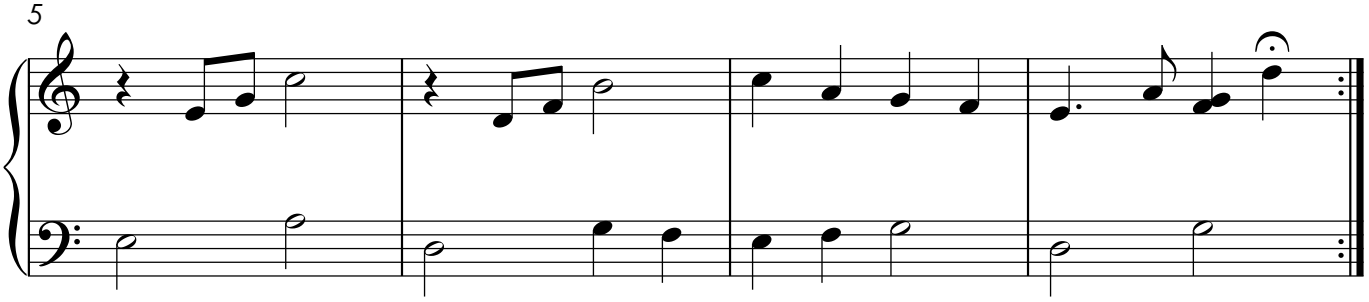
Amanda Whiting

Swung ♫=♩³♪

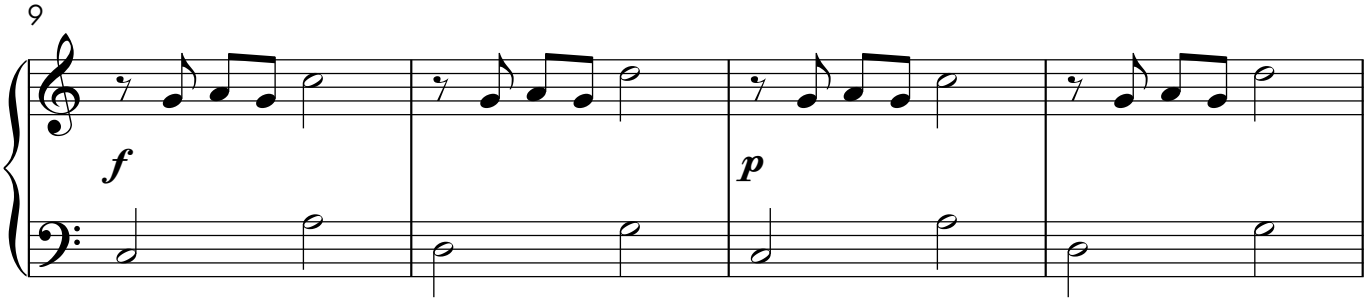
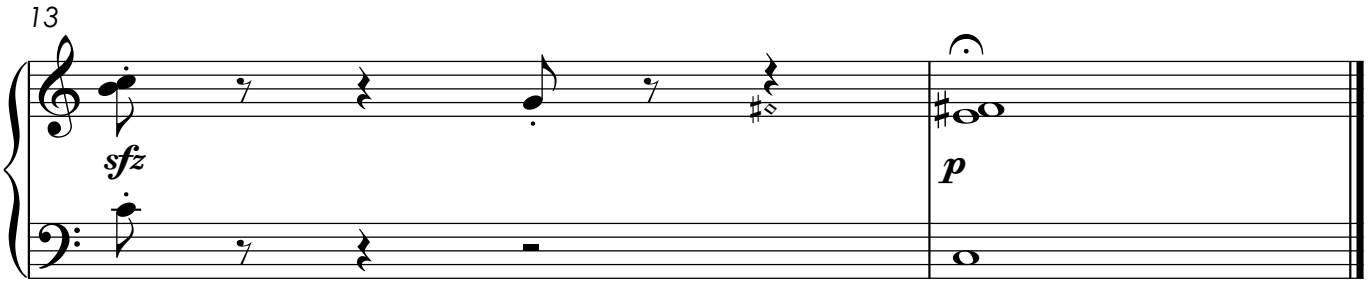


set harp to C major

5



9



13