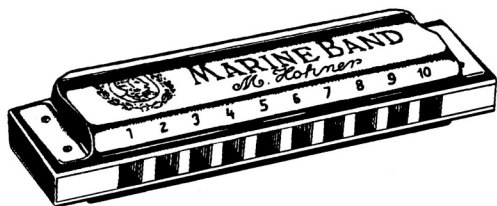


# TEACH-IN: HARMONICA

by Glenn Weiser

Helpful hints & suggestions from instrumental masters

The relationship between folk and classical music has traditionally been close. Bach and Chopin drew on the rhythms of Continental folk dances in many of their shorter compositions. Haydn and Beethoven wove strands of traditional airs into their symphonies and also arranged Scottish and Irish airs for the Scottish music publisher George Thompson. (Beethoven's arrangements include three tunes from Turlough O'Carolan.) Robert Schumann, in his music journal, advised his readers to listen to all folk songs. The list goes on.



In this teach-in, I'd like to explain how sixteenth notes are counted, and for a sample tune, I've arranged for harmonica "I Catch The Birds From Dawn To Dark" from Mozart's opera *The Magic Flute*. This aria, sung by the bass Papageno, has a very folk-like quality – the melody has no accidentals (a rarity in classical music) and it has a very simple chord structure.

Sixteenth notes are produced when a quarter note is divided into four equal parts, and are, therefore, played twice as fast as eighth notes. They are counted like this: one-ee-and-ah two-ee-and-ah, etc. Exercise 1 shows some common sixteenth-note rhythms. First, try tapping your foot slowly in quarter-note rhythm and counting out the sixteenth notes. Then play the exercise on the harmonica.

### Exercise 1

1 & a 2 e & 3 e & a 4  
4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4

1 (&) a 2 e (&) 3 e (&) a 4  
4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4

Before you try the tune, note the symbol appearing over the second D in Measure 12. This is the *fermata*, which indicates a slight pause in the music. The sixteenth notes first appear in the next measure, Measure 13.

Mozart was remarkable among composers for his ability to create images with sounds. When the sixteenth-note figure is played, you can almost see the birds fluttering their wings trying to escape Papageno as he hunts them throughout the day.

## I CATCH THE BIRDS FROM DAWN TO DARK

From Mozart's Opera *The Magic Flute*

Andante  
C-Harmonica C

8 ⑧ 7 7 ⑧ 7 ⑦ 7

G C G

⑧ 8 ⑧ ⑧ ⑦ 6 6 9 9

C G C G

8 ⑧ 7 7 8 ⑧ 7 ⑦ 7 ⑧ 7 ⑦ 7

C G D

⑧ 8 ⑧ ⑧ 9 9 ⑧ ⑧

G D7 G

⑦ ⑥ 6 6 ⑦ ⑧ ⑧ 8 ⑧ 7 ⑧

C G C G7 C

8 ⑧ 7 9 ⑦ ⑦ ⑧ 7 ⑦ 7

G C G G7 C G7

⑧ 8 ⑧ ⑦ 7 7 ⑧ 8 ⑨ 9 ⑨

C C7

8 7 ⑧ 8 ⑨ 9 7 ⑧ 8 8 ⑨ 8 ⑧ 8

F C F G7

⑨ 9 ⑩ ⑨ ⑧ ⑦ ⑦ 7 ⑦ ⑥ ⑦

C G7 C

7 8 ⑧ ⑦ 7 7 ⑧ 8 ⑨

G7 C G7 C

9 ⑨ 8 7 ⑧ 8 ⑨ 9 ⑦ 7 6 7

G7 C

8 9 9 ⑨ 8 ⑧ 7 8 7

Questions? Write to me at P.O. Box 2551, Albany, NY 12220.



*Glenn Weiser began playing guitar at age 14. He studied classical guitar during high school, picked up harmonica and banjo, and then began teaching professionally. He is the author of two harmonica books, Fiddle Tunes for the Harmonica and Blues and Rock Harmonica, two Celtic guitar books, The Minstrel Boy and Harp Music of O'Carolan for Solo Guitar, and the transcriptions of 70 Little Walter solos. Glenn performs solo acoustic blues, Celtic music with Greg Schaaf, and blues and old-time music with the St. Regis String Band.*