

Schubert – *Die Zauberharfe* (“*Rosamunde*”) overture

- Originally written as the overture to Hofmann’s play *Die Zauberharfe* (“The Magic Harp”) in 1820. The play was unsuccessful, and Schubert reused the overture for von Chezy’s play *Rosamunde* in 1823, since when it has been known by both names.
- Structure:
 - Slow introduction in C minor (up to bar 47).
 - Key change to C major at bar 48 for the introduction of the playful first theme.
 - Legato, lyrical second theme appears in the dominant key at bar 130.
 - Playful staccato third theme starts at bar 166.
 - There is a short bridge passage from bars 246 to 256.
 - We hear the first theme again at bar 257, followed by the second theme again (this time in the tonic key) at bar 340, and the third theme again at bar 376.
 - The overture ends with a coda in 6/8 time from bar 452 onwards.
- General markings:
 - Please note that there are 40 bars between Letter **I** and Letter **K** – the transposed Trumpet/Clarinet/Horn/Trombone parts have Letter **I** marked 2 bars earlier than it should be.
 - I am beating a slow 3 at the start.
 - Bars 8-15 – Clarinet 1 please mark up to *mp* in order to match the oboe part.
 - Bars 16-17 and other similar bars - emphasize the *fp* please.
 - Flutes (bars 17-18 and 28-29) and Violins (bars 31-32) – please mark *fp* at the start of the minim, then crescendo through to the end of the first crotchet of the next bar –



like this:

- Bars 19-26 – Violin 1 – please divide equally so that we can hear the tune in octaves.
- Bars 33-34 (Violin 2 and Viola) and bars 40-41 (Viola and Cello) – please bring out the moving triplet figure on the last beat of each of these bars – mark it *mp* instead of *p*. Watch the beat carefully here so that you are not playing ahead of the beat, and listen to the other moving part. For bars 33-34, please crescendo through the triplet as well.
- Bars 42-45 (Violin 1 and Viola) – please try to make the double-dotted rhythms precise and together.
- At the Allegro vivace (bar 48), I am beating in 2, and I will conduct “1, 2” to bring in the 1st violins.
- Bars 50, 66, 260 and 276 (Violin 1) – please play each bar legato if possible.
- Bar 118 and bar 328 – poco rall
- Bars 122-125 (Oboe and Cello) and bars 332-335 (Viola and Cello) – the harmony is transformed halfway through each of these 4-bar segments by your parts moving up a semitone, so please make sure that we hear this movement, and crescendo as marked.
- Bar 130 and bar 340 – a tempo
- Bars 130-133 and 134-137 (Clarinet 1 and Bassoon 1) should be separate 4-bar phrases please; similarly bars 146-149 and 150-153 (Flute 1 and Oboe 1); similarly bars 340-343 and 344-347 (Oboe 1) – we need to hear a slight break at the end of each of these phrases.

- Bar 130 (Clarinet 1 and Bassoon 1) and bar 146 (Flute 1 and Oboe 1) – please mark up to mf so that we can hear your solos over the strings.
- Bar 340-376 (Woodwind and Horns) – please mark up to mf so that we can hear your solos over the strings. These fragments need to dovetail precisely with each other, so please follow the tune and imagine you are playing the line before yours, to ensure timely pick-up.
- At Letter **D** and Letter **I**, we need a crisp staccato sound but still pp please.
- The 4th crotchet of bars 182 and 183 should be marked with accents in the strings please (similar to bars 178-180).
- Bar 186 and bar 396 – drop down to p and then crescendo from bar 198 and bar 408
- Bars 227-229 and 235-237 (Cello and Oboe) – please bring out your part – mark up to ff. Similarly bars 437-439 and 445-447 (Oboe and Bassoon).
- Bar 254 – rall
- Bar 258 – a tempo
- Bar 452 – change to 6/8 time signature – this stays in 2 at the same speed
- Bars 474-475, 476-477, 478-479, 480-481 – drop the volume down at the start of each of these 2-bar chunks, to allow room for a crescendo through each of them.
- Letter **J** (Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon) – please lighten the triplet quavers so that this doesn't start to drag – we need to keep the momentum going.
- Bars 462 and 466 (Horns) – please accent the triplet quavers to ensure that this comes through.

Weber – Der Freischutz overture





- *Der Freischutz* is about a hunter (hence the prominent horns!) who makes a pact with the devil to obtain magic bullets so that he can win a shooting contest. It is therefore full of dark, dramatic music. At times we feel that we are being swept away, with lots of syncopated rhythms in the strings set against dark ominous-sounding horns and clarinets. At other times we hear a passionate pleading clarinet solo over tremolo strings, and then sinister growling trombones towards the end. The sense of drama is heightened by changes of tempo and mood, irregular phrase lengths (e.g. two 5-bar phrases at bar 37-46, and two 3-bar phrases at bar 243-248), and recitative-like sections.
- Structure:
 - Slow introduction in C major, featuring prominent horn section
 - Fast main section from bar 37, now in C minor
 - Modulation to E flat major at bar 91, reinforced by a horn fanfare which leads into a lyrical melody on clarinet, and then a new theme appears at Letter **C**.
 - This theme is developed, passing through several keys, before returning to C minor at bar 219 for a recap of the material first heard at the start of the fast section.
 - An ff tutti chord at bar 279 takes us back into C major, where a restatement of the theme from Letter **C** takes us into the coda.
- General markings:
 - We start in a slow 4.
 - Bar 11 (Horn) – please play the grace-note rhythm as a dotted crotchet followed by 2 semiquavers.
 - Bars 27, 29 and 30 (Cello) – we need lots of attack please on the accented notes.

- Bar 33 – please maintain intensity throughout this bar, and only start the diminuendo from bar 34.
- Bar 36 – the cellos have a semibreve here, and everyone else comes off after the first crotchet beat. I will therefore bring everyone else off on the second beat of the bar, leaving the cellos hanging on their G, and will then beat “1, 2” into the *Molto vivace* section.
- Bar 37 (*Molto vivace*) is in 2
- Bars 42-45 (Clarinets) – please mark this as *f* rather than *p*, and we need the rhythm to be very clear here.
- Bar 121 rit
- Bar 123 a tempo
- Bars 130-133 (Cello and Viola) – please mark this section as *mf*, with the remaining strings still at *pp*
- Bar 136 rit
- Bar 138 a tempo
- Bar 181-190 – this is probably the most difficult section in the whole piece, with different woodwind instruments playing overlapping phrases which are offset from each other by half a bar and have irregular accents. I will try to cue you in but please count carefully. We will practice this slowly in rehearsal. There are also some accents missing from the Oboe and Clarinet parts – I have marked these in red below:



- Bar 211 – *meno mosso*
- Bar 219 – *a tempo*
- Bar 253 (Letter **K**) – *meno mosso*
- Bar 260 – please note double-dotted rhythm in first violins this time
- Bars 263-274 solo cello
- Bar 278 – no pause
- Bar 282 – no pause
- Bar 282 – In 4 (same speed but bar is subdivided into 4 rather than 2)
- Bar 287 – please observe the pause over the rest
- Bar 288 – *a tempo*, back into 2
- Bar 291 – please insert a pause over this note

Rossini – Barber of Seville overture

- Originally written as an overture to Rossini's opera "Aureliano in Palmira" – but this bubbly and witty overture seems far better suited as an overture to "The Barber of Seville". It is full of humour and drama, which we need to try to convey through the music.
- Structure:
 - Slow introduction
 - Book-ended by dramatic chords at the beginning and end.
 - Contains 2 main themes – the opening demisemiquaver motif and the violins' tune at letter **A**.
 - Allegro vivace
 - Sparkling first theme (1st violins and piccolo), then lilting second theme (1st oboe and 1st clarinet) at letter **E**.
 - Big "Rossini crescendo" from letter **F** to letter **H**.
 - Return to the first theme at letter **H** as before, but this time the second theme is taken up by 1st clarinet and 1st bassoon, whilst the horns bring a warmth with sustained notes.
 - Second big "Rossini crescendo" from letter **K** up to bar 225 (*piu mosso*), at which point there is basically a 40-bar coda which goes like the clappers!
- If you listen to recordings of this overture, there a number of variations in the way certain parts are performed:
 - Length of first note: The note is written as a semiquaver, but some orchestras play it as a demisemiquaver. We are playing it as written.
 - F double sharp in bars 4-5: Some orchestras change this to an F sharp, but again we are playing it as written.
 - Oboe entry in bar 6: Some orchestras start the oboe at the same time as the strings (i.e. at the start of the bar, as written), whilst others start the oboe half-way through the bar, which is what we are doing (i.e. not as written).
 - Second violin's second note in bar 11: Some orchestras keep this as an F sharp (as written), whilst others change it to an F double sharp. We are sticking with the F sharp here.
 - Length of appoggiatura in Violin 1 part at bars 12-13: Some orchestras elongate this to a crotchet D# followed by a quaver C#. We are playing equal quavers on both notes.
 - Rhythm in Violin 1 part in second half of bar 15: This is written as a crotchet followed by 4 semiquavers, but we are playing at as a dotted crotchet and 4 demisemiquavers.
 - Tonality in bars 21-22: Some orchestras change this from E minor to E major, but we are playing this as written.
 - Change to first theme in Allegro vivace section: This is written as starting with 3 bars of , each exactly the same, in the Violin 1 and Piccolo parts. However, on the second of these three bars, we are playing it more quietly and omitting the first quaver. So it will be   
- Other general markings:

This occurs in bars 26-28, 39-41, 155-157, and 168-170.

- I am beating in 8 at the start (i.e. quaver beat) – I will give “7, 8” to bring everyone in.
- The Allegro Vivace at bar 25 is in 2. I will give a whole bar for nothing before we start.
- Violin 1 in bars 11-15: where there are a pair of quavers (including the appoggiaturas at the start of bars 12 and 13, and the quaver-semiquaver rhythms in bars 14 and 15), please put more weight on the first of the pair and lighten the second. Please ensure that the semiquaver rests are observed!
- At Letter **F** and Letter **K**, this is the start of the big crescendo, so each time it needs to start at pp please. Also please ensure that there is more weight on the first note of each bar (from bars 115-122 and bars 201-208) and phrase off at the end of each bar.
- If you are playing repeated quavers in bars 123-133 or bars 209-219, please ensure that they are light and detached – it is important that this doesn’t start to sag.
- Letter **I** to Letter **K**: strings who are playing repeated chords should be down to pp to allow woodwind solos to come through.
- If you have dotted rhythms on a repeated note in bars 94, 98, 106, 110, 180, 184, 192 or 196, please try to create a sense of progression through the notes (slight crescendo towards next bar), so that the notes are not all the same.
- Bits to focus on for practice:
 - Strings in bars 72-90
 - Strings and bassoons in bars 225-end (consider practicing with metronome at crotchet=100 and gradually increasing towards crotchet=250)
 - Bars 101-103 and 113-115 in Flute 1, Clarinet 1, Bassoon 1 and Violin 1 – we need to hear the articulation clearly here, and you all need to be together!
 - Bars 187-189 and 199-201 in Piccolo, Flute, Clarinet 1 and Violin 1 – again we need to hear the articulation clearly, and together!

Mozart – Marriage of Figaro overture


- This overture is full of drama, and we need to make the most of the stark dynamic contrasts between p and ff in order to convey this.
- Bar 101 (Bassoon) – please mark up to f so that we can hear this part over the strings.
- Bars 292 and 293 – if you have minims marked, please change to crotchets. Bar 294 (last bar of the piece) is a minim.

Mendelssohn – Hebrides overture

- Written following Mendelssohn’s visit to Scotland in 1829. Full of dramatic music illustrating the power of the sea. Interestingly, the Violin 1 part in bars 19-20 is remarkably similar to the opening of his violin concerto (written about 10 years later). Originally called “The Lonely Isle”, it was renamed “The Hebrides” 2 years after it was written, but then when it was published the score was called “Fingal’s Cave”, so it has since gone by both names.
- It is structured around 2 key themes – the opening melody in Violas/Cellos/Bassoons and a second theme first heard in the cellos at bar 47.
- General markings:

- I am beating 4 in a bar throughout this piece – I will give “3, 4” at the start to set the speed.
- The long held notes at the start of the piece need to be p and stack up in layers as the background to the tune – violins, then clarinets, then oboes, then flutes, then horns, then trumpets.
- Bar 16 (Viola and Cello) – please make the most of the shape of the dynamics here.
- Bars 37-38 and 41-42 – let’s convey the drama with the crescendo and diminuendo here.
- At Letter **B** and Letter **E** – brass need to emphasise the fanfare-like rhythms here please.
- Bars 96, 100, 104, 108 and 110 (Viola) – please mark this as mf rather than p
- Bars 106 and 108 (Cello) – please mark this as mf rather than p
- Bar 187 (Viola and Cello) – please shape the dynamics in the second half of this bar the same as bar 16
- Bars 202-214 (Clarinets) – please mark this as mf rather than pp
- Bar 215 – poco rit
- Bar 217 – a tempo

Sullivan – *Pirates of Penzance* overture

- Unfortunately the parts are littered with typos:
 - Bar 16 (Violin 1) – the third note should be F, not A.
 - Bar 65 (Violin 1, Oboe, Flute) – the rhythm is 
 - Bar 80 (Cello) – the second note should be F, not A flat.
 - Bar 90 (Cello) – there should be an A natural on the third beat of this bar
 - Between Letters **E** and **B**, all the strings should be muted.
 - Bar 165 (Cello and Double Bass) – this should be a C#, not a C natural
 - Bar 209 (Cello) – the lower notes should both be D, rather than F natural and F#
- The overture starts in 4.
- Halfway through bar 8, the strings are marked p – please change to mf
- Halfway through bar 9, the woodwind and horns are marked mf or mp – please change to p
- Halfway through bar 10, the strings are still at mf
- Halfway through bar 11, the woodwind and horns are still at p
- Halfway through bar 12, the strings are marked p – please change to f, and then down to p halfway through bar 13
- At bar 13, the woodwind and horns should be marked f, and then down to p for bar 14
- Bars 17-32 (for those instruments playing the tune) – the phrasing needs to be 2 bars, 1 bar, 1 bar, 4 bars (and then repeat).
- Bar 48 (Strings) – needs to be pp as marked in order to contrast with the flutes.
- Bars 49-51 (Flutes) – needs to be mf in order to contrast with the strings.
- Bar 51 (Oboe, Bassoon, Clarinets) – stay at p and then suddenly f in bar 52
- Bar 64 – please make sure that we drop to p at this point, to enable crescendo at bar 68.
- Bar 78 (Oboe, Violin 1) – please change the minim to a crotchet followed by a crotchet rest.

- Bar 80 – please lean on the 3rd beat of this bar (and the 2nd beat of bar 81) to emphasise the hemiola effect
- Bar 84 – please lean on the 3rd beat of this bar (and the 2nd beat of bar 85) to emphasise the hemiola effect
- Bars 89-90 (Strings) – quieter please (flute and oboe have the tune)
- Bars 91-92 (Flute, Oboe) – please shorten the 2nd beat of each of these bars from a crotchet to a quaver followed by a quaver rest.
- Bar 101 (Bassoon) – the last 4 notes of this phrase (C, B, A, G) should be mf, not p (bassoon is the only moving part at this point)
- Bars 129-141 (Flute, Violin 1) – for all bars with repeated crotchets, please do a slight crescendo through each of these bars.
- Bar 184 (Horns) – please change dynamic from p to f with accents, then fp at bar 185 and crescendo as written.
- Bar 192 (Horns) – please stay at f throughout this bar, and drop to p from the second crotchet of bar 193.
- Bar 192 (Trumpets) – please stay at f throughout this bar, and then fp at bar 193.
- Bars 220 and 222 (Flutes) – the quavers on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th crotchets of the bar should be detached please.