

330. Händel: Hallejuja

Backgrounds of S. Radic

Who does not know the "Great Hallelujah" from the "Messiah"? In America and many Asian countries it is as well known as in Europe. It was written by **Georg Friedrich Händel** (1685 - 1759), one of the greatest composers. Handel was a powerful man, a fighting personality. He had grown tall, ate and drank huge amounts, could compose continuously for 20 hours and had an almost inexhaustible creative power. He was known for his tantrums. Once he threatened to throw a singer who refused to follow his instructions out the window.

His music is correspondingly powerful. It is broad, simple, majestic (especially in the choirs), full of the most beautiful melodies. Händel was born in Halle, Saxony. In 1710 he went to England for the first time, which became his second home. In London, Handel wrote mainly operas. Partly he had success with it, partly he had to accept failures. Among other opera composers, numerous noblemen were his opponents. Handel once said to one of them: "I would regret it if I had only entertained my audience" (as the nobles wanted), "I wished to make them better".

After all, Handel was ruined in business. He had high debts. In 1737 he suffered a severe stroke. He was paralyzed on one side and could only speak a few incomprehensible words. The doctors said he'd never be able to work again. But the miracle happened. By bathing for hours in the hot springs of Aachen his health was completely restored.



Georg Friedrich Händel 1685-1759



Handel had become humble and open to God through the misery he had experienced. He now turned away from opera with its mostly superficial plot, sung in Italian, and composed English oratorios mainly with biblical content. (For example, the melody of the famous Christmas song "Tochter Zion, freue dich" is taken from Judas Makkabäus). Now his success has remained true to him.

In 1741 he composed his most famous work, the "Messiah", in just over three weeks. It describes the way of our Saviour Jesus Christ: from his announcement, his birth, his death and resurrection to his return and our own resurrection. Handel always donated the proceeds of the "Messiah" to orphans and the poor.



The score is divided into two main sections: **Step-by-Step-Programm.** and **Real-Time-Programm.**

Step-by-Step-Programm. shows a 16-measure grid with four measures marked 1, 2, 3, and 4. The drum parts are:

- Ride:** A steady eighth-note pattern.
- HH (Adv. Tamb.):** Accented eighth notes on measures 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15.
- SD (Adv. Clap):** Accented eighth notes on measures 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15.
- BD:** A steady eighth-note pattern.

Real-Time-Programm. shows the following parts:

- Drums (Main 1):** A simple drum pattern with a bass drum on every other beat and a cymbal on every beat.
- N.C. Solo-Drums (Main 2):** A solo drum part with a bass drum on every other beat and a cymbal on every beat.
- Strings (Adv.):** A simple chord progression.
- Guitar (Main 1):** A simple chord progression.
- BASS (Main 1):** A simple bass line.

Programming instruction

At first it seems that this programming is a standard disco beat without "special incidents". The reason: the main style (Main1) is kept very simple so that the hectic, melodic happenings are not disturbed. But what is that in Main2? Here the complete accompaniment is silenced and only the solo drum part remains, consisting of the bass drum and the rider cymbal on the beats 1 and 3, which has an unexpected effect in the N.C. parts of the title: for three bars, only the solo theme of the strings and the choir is opposed to the pounding beat, without any chord/bass support! Then "the Hallelujah" rises again. In the last bar, the Hallelujah phrase is played by all the accompanying instruments and the end suddenly stops in the room, carried only by a few seconds of the digital reverb!