



BAND PROGRAM

TERM 1

Basic Pop Song Structure

– Students will study the basic song structures (or “forms”) commonly found in pop and rock music.

Diatonic Chord Progressions

– Students will learn and apply basic music theory in order to create simple chord progressions and melodies.

12 Bar Blues

– Students will study the classic “12 bar” form of music, with its simplicity being a leaping-off point to address particular issues with vocal and instrumental interplay, dynamics, and overall “groove.”

Equipment Maintenance

– Students will be shown how to correctly use, set up and maintain both their instruments and forms of amplification (where applicable), including relevant safety concerns. Basic microphone usage and technique will also be covered.

TERM 2

Learning A Basic Pop Song

– Students will study a simple pop song, with each member replicating their respective parts as per the recorded piece. Particular attention will be paid to tying this piece back to the diatonic and structural lessons from the previous term, demonstrating the practical application of basic music theory and arrangement.

Composition Of Original Material

– Building on their experience and familiarity with basic song structure, diatonic theory and a growing “chemistry” as a band established with the 12 Bar piece and pop cover, students will begin to compose their own original piece of music. Instrumentalists will

primarily compose the music and vocalists will compose lyrics and a vocal melody. All band members will assist in the arrangement of the piece. In the case of multiple singers being present in a band, the roles of shared and harmony vocals will begin to be explored.

Rhythmic Awareness

– A common issue when musicians enter a band situation for the first time is difficulty playing “in time” as a unit. Here students will be shown techniques to improve their individual and collective timing. In addition to this, “groove” and “feel” will be addressed; students will be shown methods to make their playing more interesting while maintaining solid timing.

TERM 3

Performance Techniques

– As the students’ original and cover material takes shape from a musical perspective, the actual on-stage performance of the music will be addressed. Eye contact between band members; microphone technique and showmanship for singers; and overall band aesthetics will be addressed. Students will be encouraged to display personality, individuality and enthusiasm in the interest of creating an exciting and dynamic visual performance.

Song Analysis

– Expanding upon earlier analytical efforts, students will be shown a number of pieces from different genres and eras. Structure, dynamics, melody, harmony, recording techniques, and other topics will be covered in an effort to demonstrate the stylistic qualities of various genres. Some students may be surprised at just how similar two completely different sounding songs can *actually* be!

Individual And Overall Sound/Tone Shaping

– What good is a guitar solo if it sounds like a buzz saw? What good is a groovy bass part if nobody can hear it? This is where students – vocalists included – will be shown how to shape the tone of their individual instruments to create an overall pleasing sound for their band. The use of effects will be covered, with particular attention being paid to equalisation and reverb/echo and the most effective applications thereof. The basics of creating a pleasing band “mix” will also be addressed.

TERM 4

Promotion And Social Media

– The music industry has changed in many ways over the past decade or so. One of the key changes is the ability for artists to self-promote like never before. Social media (Facebook, Twitter, ReverbNation, Instagram, etc.) is a powerful tool and, if utilised correctly, amazing results can be yielded. Students will be shown – and will be encouraged to brainstorm – methods for promoting gigs and recordings. Techniques to build an online fanbase will be covered, as will the pros and cons of both social media and more traditional promotional avenues.

Recording/Preparation

– With their original material well and truly honed, students will prepare to enter the studio to immortalise it in a recording! In the lead-up to this, the differences between rehearsal, performance, and recording will be addressed. Students will be given an insight into the recording process, with the contrast between traditional and more modern recording techniques being discussed. “Red Light Fever” will be covered; that is, the classic recording studio term for musicians panicking the moment they see the “Record” light come on. Students will be given tips and techniques to ensure their recording process goes as smoothly as possible, resulting in a finished product they can be proud of.

Performance

– Each band will be given the opportunity to perform at an end of year concert. It is here that each band will demonstrate the individual and collective techniques they have studied and fine-tuned throughout the year. In the lead-up to this performance, students will learn about pre-gig soundchecks, the logistics of playing live music (load in, set up, tear down, load out, etc.), the OH&S side of live music, and the importance (and most effective use) of on-stage sound monitoring. Most of all, though, the performance is intended to be great fun for all and a reward for the hard work applied throughout the year... not to mention a prime opportunity to show off for family and friends!