Composer of the Month : Karl Jenkins

Born : 17th February, 1944

Plays : Baritone and Soprano Saxophone, Keyboard, Piano and Oboe.

Jazz Band : Soft Machine

Have a listen to the title track from their award winning Jazz album "Six".

What do you think of it?



Quiet Beginnings...



Karl Jenkins was born in 1944 in Penclawdd, Swansea. It was a village that was famous for its cockle industry, which has its origins as far back as Roman times.





A cockle is an edible shellfish with a shell that has two parts and is shaped like a heart.





Before he became famous as a composer, Karl was a jazz musician and he composed music for television adverts.



He studied music at Cardiff University and at the Royal Academy in London.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC

One of the most famous pieces of music he wrote for an advert was for the DeBeers Diamond Company and is titled "Diamond Music". It later went on to be the opening piece of a suite of music called "Palladio"



Listen and Discuss :

What word could you use to describe the music?

Can you feel the pulse?

What instruments can you hear?

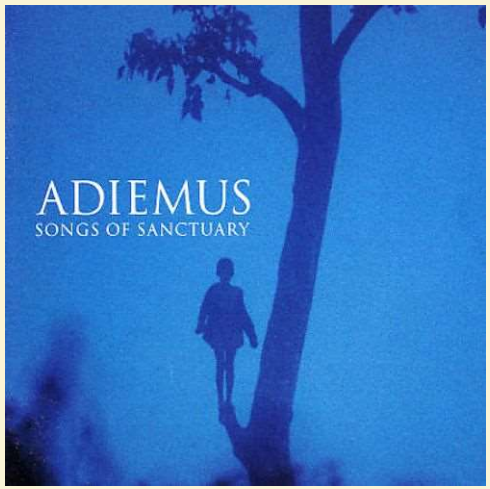
Why do you think it worked so well as the soundtrack for the advert?

However, the piece that brought him into the spotlight was "Adiemus" from his suite of music titled 'Songs of Sanctuary'.

Other well-known pieces since then have been 'Requiem' and 'The Armed Man'.

He is also known for his conducting skills.

He made up the word "Adiemus," and later learned that it roughly translates in Latin to "We will draw near."



"Karl creates the most amazing, haunting music, that is instantly recognizable & loved across the world."
Dame Kiri Te Kanawa

<u>Listen and Discuss :</u>
What do you notice about the music?
What is the tempo?
What do you notice about the lyrics of the music?
How does the music make you feel?

Elements of Music

We are going to learn more about two musical elements by listening to Karl Jenkins music.

Timbre (Pronounced Tarm-bre) describes the quality of a musical note. It is what makes a musical note sound different from another one.

Words like round, brassy, sharp, or bright can be used to describe the timbre of a sound.
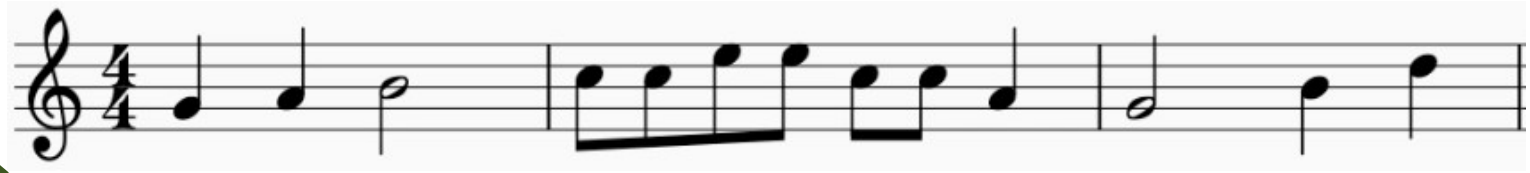


A good comparison to timbre in music is the flavour of different apples: they are all apples, but they all have their own flavours and distinct qualities.

The rhythm of a piece of music describes the duration of each note combined with others of similar or different lengths to create patterns.
Rhythm is often closely linked to the pulse of the music.

Imagine each note as a different size and colour of Lego brick you can make up different orders that create different patterns.





Timbre

Listen to Adiemus. Karl Jenkins wanted to use the voice as an instrument. He wanted his music to be accessible to all around the world and so the words he used in the piece don't belong to any specific language, they are simply meant to help the listener understand the feeling of peace and unity.

Listen : Along with the voices, which of these instruments can you hear in the music?









Timbre

As you listen to Adiemus, which of these words best describe the tone of the music?

With a partner, choose two of the words or pick ones of your own that best describe the music.

rich

dull

cold

sharp

blue

heavy

light

sad

smooth

gentle

piercing

hard

distorted

Be ready to explain your choices!

Rhythm



Karl Jenkins uses percussion instruments and female voices to create interesting rhythms in Adiemus.

Here are three lines from the piece. Try to listen out for them as you listen to the music.

A-na-ma-na coo-le ra-we
A-na-ma-na coo-le ra
A-na-ma-na coo-le ra-we a-ka-la

Try to say these words using the same rhythm that is used by the female voices.

Listening Task :

Listen to the extracts of music and answer the questions about them. You should note your answers on the reflection sheet. You can also design am album cover that could be used to help people understand the message of the music.



Requiem - Introit

Requiem - a Mass for the repose of the souls of the dead, or a token of remembrance.



The Armed Man - A Mass for Peace