

## Piano Songs and the Successful Composer

"I want to make a lot of money composing piano songs."

I know what you're thinking. This is either a very ambitious composer or a comedian. Let's face it. If you have aspirations to compose for a living then money is probably not your number one priority. You are most likely a person who needs to communicate his or her most inner thoughts to an audience or a kindred spirit. If money is a by-product of this need, then great. If not, then at least you are following your calling in life.

Over the years, successful composers have managed to communicate to audiences and/or inspire other composers with innovative compositional techniques. The former attribute often finds its vehicle in song.

Although the term song implies a tune with words, the word has been accepted in modern times as encompassing a short piece of instrumental music (no words). History is filled with these short piano songs or pieces. Some have even been labeled as such; consider Mendelssohn's Songs Without Words.

Before attempting to write such compositions, it would be safe to assume that a composer must have a solid theory background. Piano pieces generally require harmonic and rhythmical knowledge, for starters.

Another compositional prerequisite would be a grasp of the different forms used by composers of the past in order to achieve a great piano piece. Shorter works on keyboard instruments often use an ABA (ternary) form, for example.

The inspiration for a successful piano piece comes from the same place as the inspiration for a popular hit song, or a superb symphonic work. Truth be told, most composers probably don't know where this inspiration finds its roots. Sure, we can sadden our state of mind and heart in order to compose a sad melody. Likewise, we can visualize a dramatic situation in order to write a work with drive and passion. However, the moment that a catchy or communicative melody pops in ones head is pure magic, and wonderfully inexplicable in nature. That's part of the magic involved in the process.

The beauty of piano songs (short pieces) is that they do not take as long to complete as a more heavily scored work. In other words, your inspiration is fulfilled and realized much quicker in this type of score. No wonder composers of past and present have flocked to this type of composition.

With so many pianos available on the planet, and with so many able and willing pianists searching for new and inspired repertoire, your newly realized melodies are just a few steps away from being exposed to the world at large.

I've written many piano preludes in my composing career. They have been one of my most successful vehicles for exposing my name to the general public. If, as a composer, you want a fast track for becoming known within your community and beyond, then take some concrete steps towards this fast-track.

Learn to play the piano and study music theory. Short piano songs are then only a step away. Although you may still find it challenging to "make a lot of money as a composer" (after your first piano work is completed), your higher goal will have been reached sooner, in that your new work will now have the potential of reaching an attentive audience.

### About the Author

Come and join Daniel E. Friedman at [www.musicmasterstudios.com](http://www.musicmasterstudios.com) for assistance in music education and comprehension.

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