

## Music..... The Language of Love

You have everything sorted, dress, suits, venue and even the honeymoon, but what about your ceremony music? With so much to choose from, where do you begin? Well that's what I'm here for. To help allay any fears and assist with music choices and of course to answer any questions which you may have.

*Have you booked your church singer/musicians etc. etc.?* Well, have you even considered it with all the other things you have to organise? I have on occasion had couples phone me in a panic because they forgot about this aspect of the day until the last minute. And remember, the music you have for your ceremony is as memorable as the food that is served for your meal. If there are two things that people always remember about a wedding it's the music and the food. So the first course of music the guests will experience are the pieces and the musicians that you have chosen for your ceremony.

So what type of ceremony do you want, romantic or classical, traditional and celtic; modern; strings and voice etc? What you choose says so much about you, music is after all, the language of Love. If you are using a planning diary I would include in the 12 months before section sourcing/booking your wedding singer/musicians. This gives you, ample time to browse music sites, listen to CDs, and of course to raise any queries or questions that you may have with either your musicians or cleric.

I regularly have brides come to me and say *"I love the one from that film..."* Well, I hate to be the bearer of bad news but if you are having a religious ceremony and have booked your singer the other person you should talk to is your celebrant because believe it or not, there are rules. There is even an approved list of music which they can refer to. Don't worry though, by speaking to your celebrant, you are showing them that you take seriously the meaning of the pieces and how they best represent you as a couple and your marriage ceremony.

There are in fairness though, some places where lenience is shown, and these are the Processional (entrance), the Recessional (exit) and the Signing of the Register. Although I have known some clergy who include the Signing before the final blessing, so this is one aspect that should be checked out with your celebrant. I also know of at least one priest that has banned the song *She Moved Thru the Fair*.

Of all the music that has been written, one of the most popular pieces for the Processional is *Pachelbel's Canon in D* which is a truly beautiful piece. Not only though is it beautiful, but in its entirety is also very long. One of the many questions I always ask couples is how long the aisle of their church is. If the Canon is too long, it may be appropriate to include it in another part of the

ceremony where everyone can enjoy it, as it is such a shame to shorten such an exquisite piece. Other pieces that could be considered are *Air* from *Water Music* by George Frideric Handel; the Bridal Chorus from *Lohengrin* by Wagner; the Solemn Procession by Denes Agay; the instrumental version of *Sheep May Safely Graze* by J.S. Bach; Trumpet Tune by Henry Purcell or even the theme for *The Mission* Gabriel's Oboe which is now commonly known as *Nella Fantasia*. I have even known of a string quartet that was asked to play a Britney Spears number. . not sure if the cleric that day realised what it was though!

Another popular choice to include in the ceremony is an Ave Maria, and although there have been many written over the years, still to this day the most popular and recognizable are Schubert's and Bach/Gounod. To hear a live performance of Schubert's Ave Maria, from a recent wedding in Donegal, just go to my bebo page [www.bebo.com/barbaraedwardslive](http://www.bebo.com/barbaraedwardslive) I am often asked which one I prefer to sing but quite honestly, both are very moving and ultimately it is up to the couple as to their preferred choice.

But what if you are not having a religious ceremony? If you are having a civil ceremony the above restrictions on music will not apply.

If you have any questions about your ceremony or would like to comment on any aspect of this article, please email me [barbaraedwards@eircom.net](mailto:barbaraedwards@eircom.net) or mobile: 087 7825813

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