

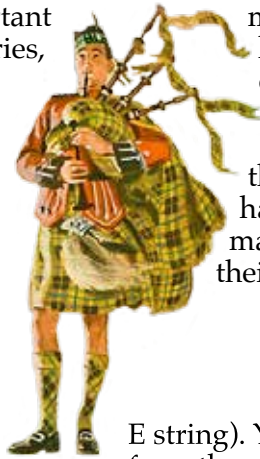
Styles & Genres



Scottish Music: Bagpipe Music 1

BAGPIPE MUSIC has been an important element in Scottish music for centuries, and a large influence on Scottish traditional music. Pipe tunes and pipe-influenced tunes are very popular and performed by folk groups, soloists, dance bands and session-goers.

The first musician to promote the playing of pipe tunes on fiddle was James Scott Skinner, who published



many pipe tunes and many of his own bagpipe-influenced compositions in his lifetime.

The rich bagpipe tradition in Scotland has persisted largely through the efforts of the army, who have employed pipe majors and maintained piping schools throughout their history.

The Bagpipe Sound

Given the vast repertoire of its music, it's remarkable to note that the bagpipe can only play nine notes. The Bagpipe scale itself is not quite normal, in that it doesn't

conform to the accepted Western idea of a scale. To translate it into something that more modern instruments can play, we approximate it by playing an A scale, but with a flattened 7th step of the scale (the G note). Instead of the seventh note of the scale being G# (4th fret of the E string), it's played as a G (3rd fret on the

E string). You can recognise tunes that come from the pipe repertoire when all the notes fall within this scale.

There are many Scottish tunes which use

this "mode" (*mixolydian*) to emulate the sound of the pipes. Pipe music doesn't use sharps or flats, but when it's written for other instruments, there are two ways of doing it. If the tune is in A, you can either write it with three sharps and use a natural sign for all the Gs, or simply use two sharps.

Cold Winds from Ben Wyvis (traditional)

pipe jig

Bagpipe 1