

Music study



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Music Study: A Comparison of Joplin's Maple Leaf Rag and Susato's Three Dances This music study paper concentrates on a comparative analysis of the two pieces – “ Maple Leaf Rag” by Scott Joplin (June 1867 — 1 April 1917) and “ Three Dances” by Tielman Susato (c. 1510/15 – after 1570) – pertaining to their instrumentation, form, harmony, tempo, meter, texture, style period, text, absolute or programmatic meaning, and sacred or secular orientation. “ Maple Leaf Rag” (1916) by Joplin, the American musician and composer of ragtime music who is celebrated for his “ The Entertainer”, belongs to his early ragtime compositions for piano. Recorded on a piano, roll the “ Maple Leaf Rag” was named after a short-lived Sedalia social club and “ he gave the genre its iconic masterpiece. It was also ragtimes biggest hit. The phenomenal success of the Maple Leaf Rag sparked a nationwide ragtime craze.” (Levang) “ Three Dances” by Susato, the Renaissance Flemish composer, instrumentalist and publisher, celebrates dance music. The three pieces include simple but artistic arrangement of dance music. “ Tielman Susato... established himself in Antwerp, c. 1529, as music copyist, flutist, and trumpeter, and later as publisher. In 1543, he produced the Premier Livre des chansons à quatre parties. . . , including eight chansons by himself.” (Reese, 290) Thus, this paper makes a comparative analysis of the two celebrated musical pieces of different period and category.

“ Maple Leaf Rag” (1916) by Joplin has been celebrated as a multi-strain ragtime and it is adorned with athletic bass lines and upbeat melodies. There are four parts in the piece and each of them has a recurring theme striding bass line with abundant seventh chords. The piece, which has a single movement or section, belongs to the genre piano piece with the instrumentation of piano and has a romantic genre piece style. “ The

explosive popularity of the Maple Leaf Rag... was founded on fortuitous circumstance... It was in all ways an unlikely combination. And yet it happened... Joplin wasn't the only composer of ragtime in the 1890s, or even the first one.... But Joplin was the decisive ragtime composer, the one whose musical imagination gave ragtime its finest expression." (Levang) The music combined march tempos, minstrel-show songs, and the 'ragged' or syncopated rhythms. The syncopation of the rhythms is especially evident in the transition between the first and second strain and it was impressively original at the time of its composition. The careful construction of the ragtime tune in the piece excels all the preceding ragtime tunes and it is not a rhythmically or musically complicated piece.

"Three Dances" by the prolific composer of instrumental music, Tielman Susato, celebrates three dance music compositions in 3 ten. troms. and 1 bs. trom. This Renaissance suite consisted of three short dances: a Ronde, Pavane, and Salterelle and the instrumentation of trumpet, horn (trumpet, trombone), trombone (horn), baritone/trombone etc enhanced this magnificent piece. These were optional tuba part for brass choir performance and the composer enjoyed great success with the score.

In evaluating the aesthetic appeal and the mechanics of each piece, it is important to note that both of them are celebrated in their own category, though there are reasons to consider the "Maple Leaf Rag" in the aesthetic appeal. The strong impact of the score on the rags of the time was mainly due to the superior mechanics used in the piece. Unlike the ordinary rags of the time, this particular piece attracted music lovers to a great extent, though the musical and rhythmic features were simple and uncomplicated. The effect of the music was that it directly reached the heart of the listeners

and its impact was simply magical. "Three Dances" by Susato, though very rich in music and instrumentation, cannot reach the heart of the music lovers to the extent the former does. Thus, in my opinion, "Maple Leaf Rag" by Scott Joplin is superior in effect to "Three Dances" by Tielman Susato which is more advanced in music and instrumentation.

Works Cited

Levang, Rex. 100 Years of the Maple Leaf Rag. Music. Minnesota Public Radio. 1999. 14 Feb. 2009. .

Reese, Gustave. Music in the Renaissance. New York: Norton. 1959. P 290.