

Pop goes the Harp!

Heavenly strings add zing to the modern wedding

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By **Roseann Canfora, Harpist**

For more than 25 years, my wedding clients have primarily called to book my services because they want to add a touch of elegance to their wedding. For them, the heavenly sounds of a concert grand harp, combined with a violin or flute echoing through the church or the garden, was enough to set the perfect mood.

Today's brides want more.

They're more knowledgeable about music, they're Internet-savvy, (they've done their research) and they know what they want. And for an increasing number of brides, it's anything but ordinary.

"I want to come in and go out to Coldplay," said one bride this year, whose fiancé had the popular band's CD playing in the car on their first date. She entered the church and made her stately walk toward her waiting groom to the song "Yellow." The two exited the church to the sounds of the harp, violin and flute spiritedly playing Coldplay's "Viva la Vida."

As a wedding music planner, nothing surprises me anymore. We've played "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" for the processional and the Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun" for the recessional. One couple who'd just adopted a 3-year old girl, wanted to enter to the theme from "Barney" (their little girl's favorite) and another couple entered to the "Notre Dame Fight Song," to the delight of families on both sides of the aisle—many of them graduates of the famed university.

Of course, I still get the traditional brides who've always dreamed of entering to the string quartet playing Pachelbel's "Canon in D", or knowledgeable brides who want the bridal party entering to the "Canon" on Harp and Violin before the bride's grand entrance to Wagner's "Wedding March" or Clarke's "Trumpet Voluntary" on the organ.



I still love my steady stream of busy brides that continue to call and simply say, “You’re the expert. Tell me what music works best for when I come in,” or the brides who ask for advice about selecting the right music for mothers to light candles or for a sand ceremony or other wedding custom selected by the bride and groom. Regardless of whether brides know what they want or they defer to me to make choices for them, my answer is always the same:

“What mood do you want?”

Each moment of the wedding has its own mood, and musicians can do so much to harvest that mood. The 30 minutes of prelude music while guests are arriving can be classic, elegant or romantic and, when cocktails are already being served on Quail Hollow Resort’s putting green before the bride enters, the mood should be upbeat and fun!

The key is, every bride has a vision of how her wedding day will look, but also how each and every moment *will feel*. My best advice to every bride, then, is to think not just about the music, but about the *moments* we need to enhance.

As you select your venue, your dress, your cake, the food your guests will enjoy, think about the *moments* and how you want to feel during each of them: your entry to the church or reception, the cutting of your cake, your first dance, the cocktail hour before you and your wedding party arrive, and for the candle-lit wedding dinner before the dancing begins. Once you know what mood you want to create for each of these moments, selecting the right music is easy and fun.

Ask any friend or family member about a wedding they’ve attended recently, and they aren’t likely to remember as many details about the flowers, the table decorations, the wedding favors or even the wedding dress, as they are to remember details of the things that affect them personally—the food, yes, but even more, *the music*.

So don’t simply select music for your wedding day—be thoughtful and creative as you and your wedding musicians work together to create moods, so that you can enter *the moment*, and truly enjoy each and every *moment* that follows on your wedding day.

Roseann Canfora, Ph.D. is one of Cleveland, Ohio’s most popular harpists, known for her unique blending of harp with violin, flute, and cello in unique adaptations of both classical and popular music. She and her Celestial Strings Harp Duo, Trio and Quartet have performed at weddings and company events throughout Northeast Ohio for more than 25 years.