

# Life in the Music Shop

By Nicole Fernandes

In the bustling thoroughfares of the meteorite jungle, there exists a homely studio called Milky Way Music Shop. This shop has every instrument under the sun - from Grand pianos to Flubas. Each instrument is played differently, their music incomprehensible to the others, and yet; in perfect harmony, they perform the orchestra of the universe. As a singer's voice might change over time from an alto to a bass, these instruments too vary their dynamics to accommodate each other like planets slowly moving along their orbits.

The grand piano's polished mahogany body gives this acoustic instrument an earthy aura. Occasionally, when the lid of the piano is left ajar, the other instruments steal glimpses of the elusive humans living within, who in turn, observe the symphonic cosmos before them with a mix of curiosity and trepidation. Some ambitious ones aspire to unravel its secrets and set off on adventures into the labyrinthine aisles of the shop, while others yearn to decipher the cryptic tunes of the other instruments.

The realm inside the piano is anchored together by hammers and strings in an intricate web. The keys are bound within this web - restricted, some might say, but silent and tuneless if untethered. The tilt of the lid prop opens up the dance floor to the waltz of the hammers and strings. The key's energetic dance, free to soar, ebbs and flows like seasons as their energy crests and wanes in turn.

The piano unveils its kaleidoscope of sounds: blues, pop, jazz, country, each seamlessly blending into the other, and yet distinct. The blues bloom slowly but surely, spontaneously, like flowers in spring, pop sparkles with energy and heat, somehow both beachside bonfires and lazy afternoons at once. Jazz dances like raindrops, heavy or light as it pleases, and

country croons and sighs as if curled up in a blanket on a frosty night, the piano pedals adjusting each tune further still between fiery fervour or serene serenade, at times a dawning day, at times a waxing moon.

Keeping up with trends over the ages, parts of the piano are periodically replaced. Renewed. Nevertheless, the piano's melodies remain timeless. The creatures that call it home often wonder; if our one instrument is so detailed, and capable of such beautiful creations, what numerous and magnificent possibilities could other instruments hold? Parallel realms of musical marvels! Like the once-forgotten soot-covered keyboard in the corner of the storeroom that had been unveiled, sending dust particles swirling around the music shop like millions of stars; the instrument so similar to their own home, that echoed its melody of existence, but was still so different. The creatures of the piano think of all the instruments now long gone, but also of the ones that still remain, standing the test of time, paying homage to the ones that came before by playing the same notes, while rejoicing in the birth of new ones by using them to create new melodies. This is the magic of the universe.