

Music Copying & Finale, Part 3

by Lee Monroe

Now is the time, you have a large score and are ready to copy it into Finale. You have a deadline looming. The temptation to just sit down and start cranking is very powerful.

DON'T! Much of what it means to be an effective copyist is the planning done prior to actually copying a note. It was imperative in the days of hand copying and it is still a valid assertion in today's world of computer notation.

Read Through the Score: Make a copy of the original score so that you can mark it up. As a hand copyist, you would read through the score looking for unisons between instruments of the same key, colla bars, and notey passages that might require some planning in your layout. With computer notation you look for the same things and more.

Finale Copy & Paste App-lications: Before I get too far into this, I wanted to make note of the distinctions between copy & paste techniques in Finale.

The most familiar technique is the drag & drop. This is an easy and effective way of moving material but there are a couple of things to keep in mind when you paste this way. All of the information will be moved - this includes measure information, key, and clef information. If you are doing a drum part with many one measure repeat bars and you just tell it to copy to the next twenty measures, then whatever information that was in that measure will overwrite the measure information that existed in your layout (double bars, key changes, etc...). The second barrier to using this technique in a totally different part of the score that you can't see. If either of these situations come up as a problem then you should think about using the other method.

Control C, Control V (<ctrl+c> <ctrl+v>) is probably my favorite way to move information around a score. This method only takes the information from within the measure and not information about the measure. Notes, articulations, slurs, dynamics, and any note attached expressions will move to the new destination without affecting the new area.

There are times when either of these techniques are appropriate.

Warning! Be careful when using Partial Measure copying. It is possible, if you aren't paying attention, to actually change where in the measure the information will occur if you don't highlight properly.

Looking for Unisons: Look for unisons of any instruments in any key or octave. With Finale you can easily copy from the flute to clarinet, or alto sax to trumpet. If your templates are set up correctly (with the appropriate transpositions) then these lines will transpose automatically. You can also copy lines that are in different octaves, then simply highlight the affected area with the mass mover tool and transpose to the correct octave. Be careful which copy method you use, if you are copying from the Violins to the Viola then you may encounter problems with the drag & drop method altering the clef.

Same Lines, Different Keys: Keep an eye out for the same musical lines that may occur in a different part of the score after a modulation to a new key. These lines can be copied, <ctrl+c> <ctrl+v>, into the new key area and will be automatically transposed to the proper key. Note that this doesn't always mean the correct octave, in some cases you may need to take one extra step to highlight the new area and transpose down an octave. Also take note when a musical line switches from one instrument to another in a different part of the score.

Articulations & Dynamics: Instead of putting in every articulation into every part, Finale has a feature that allows you to drag copy articulations, dynamics, slurs, and such only into parts that have different notes but the same articulations. This can be a huge time saver and opportunities for this should be noted in your copy of the score.

Use the technology to its maximum benefit. Careful planning takes a little more time on the front end, but it will become indispensable if you ever want to be an effective and prolific music copyists. Take care!

Mr. Monroe has been a full-time professional music copyist since 1982. In 1997, he became the sole owner of Express Music Publishing, one of the industry's leaders in transforming hand fonts into computer fonts and utilizing these fonts pro-fessionally. He has worked on many high profile projects both as a professional musician and music copyist. He has worked on a long list of projects in the capacity of music copyist they include: almost every major stage show, parade or fireworks show done for Walt Disney World since 1982.

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