

Twelve reasons to play again

For everyone who used to play. There is a version of your week with music back in it: a better week, with a better you inside it.

1 Life got loud, that is all

Nobody ever put down an instrument because the music stopped being wonderful. Life got loud; that was all. And it is not going to go quiet — better to answer it with a sound of your own.

2 It uses all of you

Playing is one of the few things that asks for everything at once: eyes, ears, hands, breath, memory, feeling. Most days use about a tenth of you.

3 An hour your phone does not get

Practice is one of the last places a notification cannot follow you. An hour lost in a slow movement is an hour of your own attention, returned.

4 The thing the machines cannot take

Software now writes, paints and answers the email. It still cannot feel a note land inside a chord and know, somewhere in the chest, that it is right. That feeling remains entirely yours.

5 Music never asks your age

It is the rare skill that does not care when you started or how long you stopped. It only asks whether you counted the rests.

6 It comes back

Sooner than you think, and more of it than you expect. Fingers remember what calendars forget.

7 Sixty people, two hours, no screens

An orchestra is one of the last rooms where dozens of people cooperate for a whole evening and nobody looks at a phone. It is oddly restful, being needed in real time.

8 The repertoire is not finished with you

Somewhere there is a slow movement you have never played, and it already has your name on the part.

9 Playing badly is still playing

Wrong notes belong in the practice room; it is one of the few places built for them. The more you play, the fewer turn up — and nobody was counting anyway.

10 You already paid for it

The hardest part, the years of learning, is behind you and fully banked. Coming back is collecting; staying away is leaving the meal you cooked.

11 Tired in the right way

Two hours inside the music and everything else waits at the door. You come home tired in the one way that feels like rest.

12 The first note

After years away it feels like opening a window in a room you had forgotten was stuffy. The instrument is exactly where you left it.

The music kept your seat. Raise your instrument and play.

