

Music 411

Preparation for Final Exam

Listening List

For each of the following, be able to provide: composer, title, date of composition (within 5 years), location in the piece, and significant stylistic or compositional traits heard in the excerpt played.

Debussy: La cathédrale engloutie

Messiaen: Turangalila Symphony

Reich: Violin Phase

Schoenberg: Angst und Hoffen

Stravinsky: Le Sacre du Printemps: Introduction; Agnus Dei, from Mass

Varese: Poeme Electronique

Webern: Op. 5, #3

Hindemith: Interlude in G, from Ludus Tonalis

Stockhausen: Stimmung; Gesang Der Jünglinge

Lutoslawski: Venetian Games

Cage: Winter Music; 4' 33"

Coleman: Free Jazz

Hancock: Quasar

Ligeti: Ramifications

Andriessen: De Staat

The Beatles: Abbey Road, Side Two

There will also be “unknown” listening, as on the Quizzes.

Written Test

- A section asking you to briefly discuss terms and concepts (when did it emerge? what composer/compositions are associated with it? etc)

- Short-answer questions, mostly on stylistic and historical topics.

- Essay:

Prepare responses to **2** of the 6 questions on the back of this page. You are allowed to consult outside sources and you may bring notes to the final exam. Construct your responses in the form of a persuasive essay (around five paragraphs long), using specific musical examples wherever possible. Although the majority of your musical examples should come from works studied this term, feel free to supplement these with examples from your music history class, performing repertoire, general knowledge, etc. Spelling, grammar, organization, and factual accuracy all count!

1. Why is Claude Debussy often considered the "father of contemporary composition?" (Hint: you will need to do more than just discuss Debussy's music. His influence must be demonstrated.)
2. Within the context of contemporary music composition, discuss the concept of "a balance between unity and variety."
3. Discuss the use of symmetry in contemporary composition, including as many parameters, composers, and pieces as you can.
4. Discuss the evolution of timbre as an important compositional element in the 20th century. Mention some 19th century precursors and 21st century continuations.
5. Igor Stravinsky is quoted as saying, "to continue in one path is to go backward." Contemporary composition is often considered a search for new modes of expression. Explain how composers have explored new ways of dealing with pitch, rhythm, form, and texture.
6. Igor Stravinsky is also quoted as saying, "I have always considered that in general it is more satisfactory to proceed by similarity rather than by contrast. Music gains strength in the measures that it does not succumb to the seductions of variety. What it loses in questionable riches, it gains in true solidarity. Contrast produces an immediate effect; similarity only satisfies in the long run." Although contemporary composition is often considered a "search for new modes of expression," this music did not arise out of a vacuum. Pick several "new" procedures and illustrate their connection with compositional practice of earlier eras.