

COMPOSITIONAL PRACTICES (c. 1925-55)

Music Composition 212, 412

(2020, Fall Term)

Instructor, Robert Morris

On-line Lecture Schedule

The following lists the topics and pieces we will cover during the term is arranged into 14 “modules.” I will lecture via videos. Each video will last from five to 30 minutes in duration. Please note: you may watch the lectures any time during the term after the launch date, but the dates for the three project readings and listening quizzes can only be approximately specified at this time.

It is best to view the lectures in sequence. Keep up to date with the lectures so you don’t fall behind and become swamped. The nice thing about on-line video lectures is that, after the launch date, you can stop and replay sections as you will and replay the entire lecture at any time.

There are two kinds of lectures: 1) videos that deal with compositional craft and ideas, composers, pieces and their contexts and analysis; 2) videos that introduce 20th century music theory terminology, notations, concepts, and applications. Also, see below under **Theory Topics**.

The lectures and slides for the lectures will be available on Blackboard. **You will also find this text on Blackboard; it is important you download it** so you can access the pieces on the listening list and know the pieces required for each quiz.

We will keep in touch with each other via email. If you have questions, please send them to me **and** the entire class. I will respond as soon as I can.

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Lecture content and deadlines

module numbers and titles	video launch date	video topic	Special events	video theory topics
I Getting Started.	8/26 (W)	<p>VID1: Introduction: trends in new music; bibliographic sources.</p> <p>VID 2: Thoughts on the relations between creativity and knowledge.</p>		VTH 1: Pitch and pitch-class (pc) space. Integer notation; function concept and notation
II Bartók <i>Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta</i>	8/31 (M)	<p>VID 3: Béla Bartók.</p> <p>VID 4: First movement overview.</p> <p>VID 5: The fugue theme and its generative powers.</p> <p>VID 6: Melodic syntax graphs.</p> <p>VID 7: Fibonacci and other series; Does Fib series model the fugue?</p> <p>VID 8: Duration schemes and hierarchies.</p> <p>VID 9: Aspects of the second movement.</p>		<p>VTH 2: T_n, I, and intervals in pitch space</p> <p>VTH 3: T_n, I, and intervals in pc space</p> <p>VTH 4: Sets and set theory ops; $\langle \rangle$, $\{ \}$, $()$, and $[]$ notations</p> <p>VTH 5: Set-classes in p and pc space; T_n and T_nI invariance</p>
III Stravinsky, <i>Agon</i> .	9/14 (M)	VID 10: Igor Stravinsky and neo-classicism.		VTH 6: The set-class table; dyadic, and trichordal set-classes

		<p>VID 11: Agon as a whole.</p> <p>VID 12: First and second movements: <i>Pas-de-Quatre</i> and <i>Triple Pas-de-Quatre</i>.</p> <p>VID 13: Diatonic set theory?; <i>First Pas-de-Trois</i>.</p> <p>VID 14: <i>Gailliard.e</i></p>		VTH 7: The interval-class vector of a pcset.
score due by email on 9/28 (M) reading session TBA			Composition Project I (Based on Lucas/Fibonacci and/or other series)	
IV Timbre, Register, and Articulation.	9/28 (M)	<p>VID 15: taxonomies of timbre.</p> <p>VID 16: spacing, clangs, registers, formants, and analysis of timbre.</p>		VTH 8: The M and MI transforms; the invariance vector
held circa 10/5 ZOOM meeting for all			Listening Quiz 1	
V Edgard Varèse	10/5 (M)	<p>VID 17: Edgard Varèse.</p> <p>VID 18: <i>Ionization</i>.</p> <p>VID 19: <i>Intégrales</i>.</p>		VTH 9: Inclusion and complementation among pcsets and set-classes
VI Summary of Pitch-Class-Set Theory.	10/12 (M)			<p>VTH 10: The world of set-classes. Z-relation.</p> <p>VTH 11: Invariance matrices.</p>

				VTH 12: Cyclic adjacencies and invariance.
score due by email on 10/19 (M) reading session TBA			Composition Project II (a short piece based on one or more set-class(es) with emphasis on harmony and timbre)	
VII Oliver Messaien	10/19 (M)	VID 20: Oliver Messaien. VID 21: <i>Poèmes pour Mi</i> : first song, <i>Action de grâces</i> .		VTH 13: “Modes of Limited Transposition” The complement theorem
VIII Elliott Carter	10/26 (M)	VID 22: Elliott Carter. VID 23: <i>String Quartet II</i> .		VTH 14: All-interval tetrachords
held circa 11/2 ZOOM meeting for all			Listening Quiz 2	
IX Twelve-tone technique	11/2 (M)	VID 24: Basic Twelve-tone concepts and notations. VID 25: Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern		VTH 15: Functions of Rows VTH 16: Row table symmetries
X Alban Berg	11/2 (M)	VID 26. Aspects of Berg’s violin concerto.		VTH 17: The rotation operator
XI Anton Webern	11/9 (M)	VID 27: <i>Symphony, opus 21, 1st movement</i> . VID 28: Aspects of <i>Concerto for Nine Instruments, opus 24</i> .		VTH 18: Total and partial row invariance

		VID 29A: Rows and form in the Piano <i>Variations, opus 27.1.</i> VID 29B: Rows and form in the Piano <i>Variations, opus 27.2.</i>		
XII Luigi Dallapiccola	11/16 (M)	VID 30: <i>Quaderno Musicale di Annalibera: N. 1 - SIMBOLO.</i> VID 31: Other movements of the <i>Quaderno.</i>		
held circa 11/23 ZOOM meeting for all			Listening Quiz 3	
XIII Arnold Schoenberg	11/23 (M)	VID 32: <i>Piano Concerto</i> , opening measures. VID 33: <i>Violin Concerto</i> , opening measures.		VTH 19: Regions, row quartets, and hexachordal combinatoriality
score due by email on 11/30 (M) reading session TBA			Composition Project III (a short but sophisticated twelve-tone or serial piece)	
XIV Serial Stravinsky	12/7 (M)	VID 34: aspects of <i>A Sermon, A Narrative, and a Prayer.</i>		VTH 20: Rotational arrays

Final Exam: To be scheduled within exam period, Dec 11-13 (F-Sun).

Other Matters

Sibley Library

Please check the reserve list for this course at the library on which I have placed the scores for the works covered in class.

Readings of Compositional Projects

We will have a synchronous in-person class time for the readings of compositional projects where we will meet at a location TBA observing social distancing.

For each project write a short piece (about 1-3 minutes long) for players in the class; or get your own players to play your pieces. If you can, hold a brief preliminary rehearsal before the reading/performance session. You will be asked to introduce your piece to the class and tell us something about it including how it satisfies the nature of the project.

Quizzes

The quizzes will be held on-line at a given date and time TBA. All students should join a Zoom meeting for the exams and record their answers on an email sent to me after the exam.

In each of the three quizzes, you will be asked to identify items from one of the three listening lists (see below) by ear alone (no notes, scores, or other aids). Approximately 7 to 10 musical examples on CD or tape will be played up to four times. There will be no “trick” questions. Experience has shown that “cramming” for this exam does not work, so stick to a schedule for listening—so many hours per week. Links to recordings of these pieces are given below. Paste the links into your browser to hear the items.

The listening lists for each quiz and the sources for the music are given later in this document.

Theory Topics

In each module above there are various theory topics. Some of this will be familiar to some of you, but if so, still review the first few theory videos. The later ones will probably be new to you in some way. The text for these topics is the very laconic but complete text called “Bob’s Atonal Music Primer” on my website. Also, you can read the “composition tutorial,” which goes into all the topics in greater detail.

click on:

<http://ecmc.rochester.edu/rdm/pdflib/BATP.pdf>

<http://ecmc.rochester.edu/rdm/pdflib/Composition.Tutorial.all.pdf>

Another file you need to download is the Set-Class Table.

Here is the link to it:

<http://ecmc.rochester.edu/rdm/pdflib/set-class.table.pdf>

Final Exam

The final examination lasts 3 hours and will be held on-line sometime during the exam period. In the exam, you will be asked to write brief essays on composers and compositional trends and identify terms and concepts covered during the term. You may also be asked to write brief musical examples to illustrate a compositional technique.

Grades

Your final grade: the grades of the three quizzes (10% each), the grades of your three projects (15% each) and the final exam (25%).

Second Term

Second term topics will include: extensions of twelve-tone theory; electronic and computer music's influence on new music; new conceptions of musical space, form, and environment; notational innovations; new instrumental resources; indeterminacy, stochastic and aleatoric composition; micro-polyphony and "mass orchestration;" theater and ritual music; process music; neo-romanticism; minimalism; post-modernism.

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Listening Lists for Quizzes

Listening Quiz 1 (circa Oct. 5) String Quartets and Violin Concertos

Babbitt String Quartet II
Bartók String Quartets III through VI
Berg Lyric Suite
Berg Violin Concerto
Carter String Quartet II
Schoenberg Violin Concerto

Listening Quiz 2 (Nov. 2) Piano solos, Piano, Concertos, and other works with Piano

Dallapiccola Quaderno Musicale di Annalibera
Messiaen "Mode de valeurs et d'intensités"
Schoenberg Piano Pieces, opus 23
Schoenberg Piano Concerto
Stockhausen Piano Pieces, I through IV
Stravinsky Movements
Webern Variations for Piano, opus 27
Webern Concerto, opus 24

Listening Quiz 3 (Nov. 23) Concerted Works and Song Cycles

Babbitt Du (song cycle)
Bartók Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta
Berg Three Pieces for Orchestra
Schoenberg Five Orchestra Pieces
Stockhausen Kontrapunkt
Stravinsky Agon
Stravinsky Variations for Orchestra
Varèse Ionization
Varèse Intégrales
Varèse Octandre
Webern Sinfonie, opus 21
Webern Songs, Opus 25

Music for the quizzes: YouTube sources (SS = scrolled score)
(Paste these links into your browser)

Composer and piece	Call number	Link to recording on WWW
Babbitt Du (song cycle)	M1621.4 .B112d	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CYF_EFnBqJM
Babbitt String Quartet II	M452 .B112.2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vItciC1Lopo
Bartók Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta	M1140.B37 M8	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54U8U13_NUQ
Bartók String Quartet III	M452 .B29.3 min.	SS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXFR2n8kUhM
Bartók String Quartet IV	M452 .B29.6 min.	SS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTnbrLXEGjI
Bartók String Quartet V	M452 .B29.5 min.	SS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Du07qCXkNa8&
Bartók String Quartet VI	M452 .B29.4 min.	SS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slMC_rOa77A
Berg Lyric Suite	M452.B493 L99 1955a, min.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64wipsVJe2I
Berg Three Pieces for Orchestra	M1045 .B493Om min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvYCllyyPGUk https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRngjldTUf0 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6de0DpRIgwo
Berg Violin Concerto	M1012 .B493 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSUDz0-7rWE SS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gd0dMs0MTg8
Carter String Quartet 2	M452 .C323 no.2	Available only in movements Introduction https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjXB2hAOzRk (I) Allegro fantastico https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ozpeBUZY0Y Cadenza for Viola https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvZiWirgFew (II) Presto scherzando https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O97RF-bNRIU Cadenza for Cello https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_HI02cbj68 (III) Andante espressivo https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6xoCnBr2GI Cadenza for First Violin https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iA_dmq967HY (IV) Allegro https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-qL5mCONSM Conclusion https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMxCBqvT7bQw
Dallapiccola Quaderno Musicale di Annalibera	M24 .D144q	SS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kb6PxV6f4C4
Messiaen "Mode de	M25 .M585Mo	SS:

valuers et d'intensités"		https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJBGJAyAQ8
Schoenberg Piano Concerto	M1011 .S365 Op.42	SS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEY9lmCZbIc
Schoenberg Five Orchestra Pieces	M1045 .S365 op.16	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXdJfabr-6I https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQt70EBQZ5g
Schoenberg Piano Pieces, opus 23	M25 .S365 op.23	Note: from 19:10 to 29: 10 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wWKbToipO8
Schoenberg Violin Concerto	M1012 .S365 1939a	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ramcVkeLGIQ
Stockhausen Kontrapunkt	M1045 .S864 K No.1 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mDkHem_jMEw
Stockhausen Piano Pieces, I through IV	M25 .S8645.2	Note: from 00:00 to 7:24 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mmimSOOry7s
Stravinsky Agon	M1520 .S912 Ag Folio	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaHcT70RcsA
Stravinsky Movements	M1010 .S912M	SS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y0lQUQzmD-8
Stravinsky Variations for Orchestra	M1003.S912 V1min.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBcVKi5jpFM
Varèse Intégrales	M1045 .V292I	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yBS_Yzb7JCc
Varèse Ionization	M985.V37 I6	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EmDaI_H6buE
Varèse Octandre	M862.V296 O21	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvMhyp4W2bw
Webern Variations for Piano, opus 27	M27 .W376 op.27	SS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hZXpDGQ-0M
Webern Concerto, opus 24	M985 .W42	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqFetTU05wE
Webern Sinfonie, opus 21	M1001 .W376 op.21min.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dlpYYhJFXEM
Webern Songs, Opus 25	M1621 .W376L Op.25	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEW-iOB6E64