Listening Gallery: Making Music Modern*

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NOTE: Please note that you must have the most recent copy of Macromedia's Flash plugin installed to play the musical examples.

Exercise 1 ***(Solution on p. 3.)***

How is ambiguity created in the following excerpt?

This media object is an audio file. Please view or download it at <http://music.cnx.rice.edu/Brandt/musicmodern/webern_sixpieces.mp3>

(select all that apply)

a) More personal musical language
b) Changing pulse and meter
c) Unpredictable continuity
d) Absence of literal repetition
e) Heightened dissonance
f) Dissonances left unresolved

Exercise 2 ***(Solution on p. 3.)***

How is ambiguity created in the following excerpt?

This media object is an audio file. Please view or download it at <http://music.cnx.rice.edu/Brandt/musicmodern/young_wisp.mp3>

(select all that apply)

a) More personal musical language
b) Prominent use of silence
c) Weakened sense of pulse and meter
d) Absence of literal repetition
e) Unpredictable continuity
f) Dissonances left unresolved

Exercise 3 ***(Solution on p. 3.)***

How is ambiguity created in the following excerpt?

This media object is an audio file. Please view or download it at <http://music.cnx.rice.edu/Brandt/musicmodern/carter_eightetudes.mp3>

(select all that apply)

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a) More personal musical language
b) Prominent use of silence
c) Minimal exposition
d) Harmonic independence
e) Heightened dissonance
f) Absence of literal repetition
g) Weak rhetorical reinforcement

Exercise 4 ***(Solution on p. 3.)***

How is ambiguity created in the following excerpt?

This media object is an audio file. Please view or download it at <http://music.cnx.rice.edu/Brandt/musicmodern/feldman_threedances.mp3>

(select all that apply)
a) More personal musical language
b) Prominent use of silence
c) Weakened sense of pulse and meter
d) Absence of literal repetition
e) Unpredictable continuity
f) Heightened dissonance
g) Dissonances left unresolved

Solutions to Exercises in this Module

Solution to Exercise (p. 1)

a) More personal musical language
b) Changing pulse and meter
c) Unpredictable continuity
d) Absence of literal repetition
e) Heightened dissonance
f) Dissonances left unresolved

All of the above contributed to the movement's ambiguity.

Solution to Exercise (p. 1)

a) More personal musical language
b) Prominent use of silence
c) Weakened sense of pulse and meter
e) Unpredictable continuity
f) Dissonances left unresolved

All of the above are true except for the absence of literal repetition: An oscillation between two notes in the low register occurs twice during the piece. However, many sonic events occur once only; and the recurrence of the oscillation is hard to foretell.

Solution to Exercise (p. 1)

a) More personal musical language
d) Harmonic independence
e) Heightened dissonance
g) Weak rhetorical reinforcement

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Carter writes in a personal musical language. His second etude for winds consists of a rapid passage that is played over and over by each of the four winds. However, each starts on a different note, leading to dissonant combinations; and the voices are out-of-phase, leading to weak rhetorical reinforcement.

Silence does not play a role. The flute begins alone, establishing an expository statement. Each instrumental part consists only of literal repetition–so these three choices are less accurate.

Solution to Exercise (p. 2)

a) More personal musical language
b) Prominent use of silence
c) Weakened sense of pulse and meter
d) Absence of literal repetition
e) Unpredictable continuity
f) Heightened dissonance
g) Dissonances left unresolved

All are true.