

Listening for Exam I (17 Feb 2009)  
MHL 204

Plus questions to be used for short answers (2-3 sentences)

Exam will include score and listening ID, plus questions on them taken from those listed below. There may be a couple of term definitions in relationship to the scores, and there will be a short essay (2-3) paragraphs. The essay will either ask about modernist aspects of some of the works from this unit or about the use of borrowed music (i.e., where does a composer take borrowed music from, how is it used, how is it altered and/or what does it mean in the context of the piece). So prepare essays on both of those subjects, picking about three scores for each essay topic.

Scores:

Strauss	Don Quixote, Op. 35, Var. 1-2	Tone Poem	1897
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What determines the form of this piece? How are traditional forms such as concerto and variation used? How are they changed, and for what purpose, or with what result?

Name one example of music used for a very specific representation. Be specific yourself about what is represented and what musical means Strauss uses to achieve this. Besides sheep, one could also mention windmills, donkeys, or how the two principal soloistic themes represent aspects of the main two characters.

In what sense might Strauss have been considered a modernist while he was actively composing? What aspects of the German concert tradition did he reject? How might this connect to the story of Don Quixote?

Mahler	<i>Symphony #2</i> ("Resurrection") 3 <sup>rd</sup> mvt.	Symphony	1894
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What is the tune about the Mahler takes for a main theme of his third movement? Where is that tune taken from [Des Knaben Wunderhorn] and what is it?

What was Mahler's attitude towards program music and how is this reflected in his own writings about this symphony?

Debussy	<i>Syrinx</i>	Character Piece (?)	1912
<p>What is the meaning of the title? What was it composed for and how was it used?</p>			
<p>What kinds of scales does Debussy use and where? How does these guarantee the undermining of traditional harmony? How does he use these to structure his piece?</p>			
<p>How does Debussy's rhythm in this work undermine a strong sense of meter? How does this contrast with Stravinsky's use of rhythm in something like the Rite, which also undermines a strong sense of meter?</p>			
Debussy	<i>Nocturnes: Nuages</i>	Tone Poem	1899
<p>What are some of the ways in which Debussy organizes this work (address specific musical parameters, such as use of contrasting rhythms, instrumental timbres, register, pitch collection etc.)?</p>			
<p>What aspects of this kind of organization help to make this music illustrative?</p>			
<p>In what ways does this piece illustrate aspects of Debussy's attitude toward mainstream academic music composition?</p>			
Scriabin	<i>Vers la flamme</i>	Tone Poem	1912
<p>What are the main musical building blocks of this work? How do they change?</p>			
<p>What musical elements does Scriabin use to impart a sense of progression in the work?</p>			
<p>Is there a sense of a key in this work? Why or why not? Which harmonies either contribute to or undermine a sense of key?</p>			
Stravinsky	<i>Petrouchka</i> , 1 <sup>st</sup> Tableau	Ballet	1911
<p>Where and when is this work set? What are the basic elements of the plot?</p>			
<p>What kind of pre-existent musical materials did Stravinsky introduce into this work? How did he use them and what do they have to do with the setting?</p>			
<p>What group was this work composed for and where was this group based?</p>			

Stravinsky	<i>The Rite of Spring</i> a) Danse des adolescentes b) Danse sacrale	Ballet	1911-13
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Who commissioned this work?

What is this ballet meant to portray? How is this different from more traditional ballets? In what ways does Stravinsky's music contribute to the subject?

In what ways does Stravinsky undermine expectations concerning meter? Name specific examples.

Schoenberg	String Quartet #2 a) First movement: b) Fourth movement	String Quartet (!)
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What key is this work in? In the first movement, what elements suggest sonata form? How do the harmonies undermine standard sonata form expectations?

What text does Schoenberg use for the last movement of this quartet? What does it describe and who wrote it? What musical elements suggest the text?

Schoenberg	Pierrot lunaire	Melodrama
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No. 8: Nacht (Night)  
No. 13: Enthauptung (Beheading)

What is a melodrama? How did Schoenberg alter the usual understanding of melodrama in this work [i.e., what was the vocal invention that he used]?

How is No. 8 organized? What genres from the past is Schoenberg drawing on? How does Schoenberg alter his basic musical materials throughout No. 8?

What is this text about? Who is/was Pierrot and how is he "moonstruck?"

Schoenberg Piano Suite, Op. 25  
 a) Prelude  
 b) Minuet and Trio

In what ways does Schoenberg pay tribute to music of the past? In what ways does it resemble the music to which his Piano Suite pays tribute [especially the Minuet]

What structural purposes does Schoenberg's use of a 12-tone row serve?

What particular features does this tone row exhibit (i.e., B-A-C-H quotation, pitches 3 and 4 in main forms of row always containing the same two pitches etc.)

Berg	Violin Concerto First movement	Violin Concerto
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In what ways does Berg's row for this work make reference to tonal music?

What music does Berg quote in this work? What significance might it have had for him, especially given the inspiration for the work?

## Terms to Know

Modernism

Historicism

Wagnerism

Divisive rhythm

Additive rhythm

Sprechstimme

Atonal

12-tone

tonal

modal

all composers and dates

Diaghilev

Nijinsky

Octatonic scale

Whole tone scale

Chromatic scale

Pentatonic scale

Stefan George

“melodrama” (Pierrot)

Pierrot

Des Knaben Wunderhorn