BAIN MUSC 525
Post-Tonal Music Theory

FINAL PROJECT
Serial Analysis

Description

Analyze an opening passage of a (twelve-tone) serial composition of particular interest to you[1]. Use appropriate analytical techniques (e.g., Straus 2005, Lester 1989, etc.) to examine the structure of the series, structure of the passage as a whole, and any special procedures employed by the composer in the composition of the work Use repeated hearings of a recorded performance of the work to help verify your hypotheses.

Due Date

Friday, December 14, 4 pm in my SOM box or under my office door (R227).

Process

1. Choose an appropriate (twelve-tone) serial work and opening passage.

   Twelve-tone works by Babbitt, Berg, Boulez, Dallapiccola, Krenek, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Webern are highly recommended. Works by Berio, Carter, Copland, Ligeti, Messiaen, Nono, Perle, Sessions, Stockhausen, Wuorinen may also be of interest.

   Or consider choosing a work by instrumentation or genre, for example, a serial composition for your primary instrument, solo piano, string quartet, opera, and so forth. Works discussed in the Straus (2005) end-of-chapter *Analysis* and Lester (1989) *Suggestions for Further Study* sections are also highly recommended.

2. Use the analytical techniques discussed in Straus Chapters 5-6, as well as Chapters 1-4, to uncover relationships that exist beneath the surface of the music.

3. Use the Music Library and online resources like JSTOR to find an analysis of the piece you have chosen.

4. Determine the series of the work (on your own, or use secondary sources). Notate the series on a piece of manuscript paper. Identify its adjacent-interval structure (opci and ic), the set class membership of its discrete trichords, tetrachords and hexachords, and any special properties of the series, for example, all-interval series, combinatoriality, derivation, 'tonal' orientation, etc.

5. Create a 12x12 matrix, or other appropriate matrix, for the work.

6. Create a twelve count for the passage, marking all series forms and order numbers (1-12) on the score. You may use *fixed-zero* or *movable-zero* notation.

7. Write an analytical paper discussing important structural features of the passage. Highlight structural features of particular interest to the composer.

[1] For example, a favorite composer, a work for your primary instrument, etc.

Things to look for and discuss:

All-combinatoriality in works by Babbitt
All-interval series
Fixed registration in Webern
Hexachordal arrays in Stravinsky
I-combinatoriality in works by Schoenberg
Important invariance relations
Klangfarbenmelodie in works by Webern
Multiplication in works by Boulez
Overlapped presentation of series forms
Perle Category A vs. Category B series form presentations
Pointalistic textures in works by Webern
Registral center of balance around a particular pitch
Serialization of elements other than pitch
Tonal orientation of the series and its presentation
etc.

Deliverables

1. Project proposal via e-mail (Due: Wednesday, Dec. 5). Composer, title, date of composition, and any other important information about your project.

2. Clean photocopy of the score

3. On-score analysis (please use color!)

4. Manuscript page(s) with series indicated using staff notation and identification of important structural features of the series (see above). You should also notate important melodic/harmonic units, motives, transformation diagrams, and include musical examples where appropriate.

5. 12x12 matrix, or other appropriate matrix

6. Analytical paper (typed, double-spaced), including musical examples
   Undergraduate: 2-3 pages
   Graduate: 3-5 pages

Grading

1. Selection of an appropriate serial work - 15%

2. Followed directions - 25%

2. Used appropriate analytical techniques - 30%

3. Overall presentation, effort, depth of analysis, creativity, etc. - 30%