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TERMS AND CONCEPTS OF 20TH C. MUSIC

GENERAL:

ostinato -- a clearly defined phrase (both rhythm and pitches) that repeats consistently throughout a passage or work

palindrome -- language or music that is the same forwards as backwards

SCALES:

chromatic -- 12 note scale

microtonal -- scales which include intervals smaller than a minor second

modes -- church modes (ionian, dorian, phrygian, lydian, mixolydian, aeolian, locrain)

modes of limited transposition -- scales of 6-10 notes that have fewer than 12 transpositions without duplication of pitch-class content.

octatonic -- 8 note scale; alternating whole and half steps

pentatonic -- 5 note scale; 1,2,3,5,6 of the major scale

whole-tone -- 6 note scale; all whole steps

MELODY:

elements of melodic organization --

inversion

repetition

return

sequence

Hauptstimme -- primary voice / line

melody -- the horizontal aspect of music

Nebenstimme -- secondary voice / line

sequence (real and tonal) -- the immediate repetition of melodic or harmonic material at another pitch level; real = exact intervals used in the repetition, tonal = some intervals are changed

stylistic features of 20th c. melodies --

assymetrical meters

avoidance of traditional harmonic implications

"emancipation of the dissonance" -- free treatment dissonances

large leaps

less lyrical

less regular phrase structure

more chromaticism

more expression marks

more fragmented / angular

unconventional rhythmic patterns / meters

use of 12-tone technique

use of pitch class cells

wide range

wider range of dynamics

HARMONY

added note chords (chords of addition) -- basic chords, such as triads, with added seconds, fourths, or sixths

atonality -- music that has no perceivable tonal center

bitonal -- a type of polytonality in which there are only 2 tonal centers

chromatic mediant -- two chords / keys a third apart that have the same quality (major or minor)

extended tertian sonorities ("tall" chords) -- 9th / 11th / 13th chords

harmony -- the vertical aspect of music

methods of establishing a tonal center --

accent

dynamics

ostinato

pedal point

register

reiteration / repetition

return

mixed-interval chords -- a chord that combines 2 or more interval types (with their inversions / compounds) to form a complex sonority

neotonality -- music that is tonal but in which the tonal center is established throughout nontraditional means; may be tertian and non-tertian

open-fifth chord -- a traditional sonority that is transformed into something unusual by leaving out a note; in this case a triad without a third

pandiatonicism -- a passage of music that uses only the tones of a single diatonic scale but oes not rely on traditional harmonic progressions and dissonance treatment to establish the tonal center

parallelism / planing -- moving the same chord / interval in the same direction

polychords -- the combination of 2 or more chords into a complex sonority; the listener must be able to perceive 2 separate chords, not one larger ("tall") chord

polytonality -- the simultaneous use of two or more aurally distinguishable tonal centers

quartal / quintal chord -- chords built of the interval of a fourth or fifth; the fourth or fifth does not have to be perfect in quality; notation: 3x4 on B = 3 note quartal chord starting on B

secundal chords -- chords built of seconds

split note chords -- a chord in which one or more chord members are "split" by adding a note a minor second away; e.g., C-E-G-G# = C(5!)

structural placement / formal placement of chords

tone cluster -- secundal harmonies in which the notes are placed adjacent to one another

whole-tone chord -- any chord whose members could be obtained from a single whole-tone scale

RHYTHM:

added values -- the addition of some note value to beats of a measure

additive rhythm -- passages in which some short note value remains constant but is used in groups of predictably varying lengths

ametric -- music in which there is no perceivable metric organization

assymetrical meter -- usually, meters with 5 or 7 as the top number

beat -- the basic pulse in music

changing time signatures / mixed meter / variable meter / multimeter -- changing from one time signature to another

complex meter -- a meter such as 4+2+3 / 8

compound beat -- division of the beat into 3 equal parts

duple / triple / quadruple meter -- grouping of beats into 2s, 3s and 4s respectively

fractional time signature -- a meter in which the top number includes or is a fraction

isorythm -- the use of a rhythmic pattern that repeats throughout a passage or work; originated in 14th century motets

measure -- one full unit of the meter

meter -- the grouping of beats into larger units

metric modulation (tempo modulation) -- the method of changing tempos precisely by making some note value in the first tempo equal to a different note value (or at least a different proportion of the beat) in the second tempo; used first by Elliott Carter

nonretrogradable rhythm -- a rhythmic pattern that sounds the same whether played forward or backwards and so the retrograde version cannot be distinguished from the original version

nontraditional time signatures -- meters using values other than 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 12 for the top number

polymeter -- the simultaneous use of 2 or more distinguishable time signatures at the same moment; they may have

> same time signature, but displaced

> different signatures with bar lines coinciding

> different signatures with bar lines not coinciding

proportional notation -- music in which the actual duration of the notes is specified only by the placement of the notes within the measure; i.e., closer together = shorter note values, more spread apart = longer note values

rhythm -- the organization of the time element in music

serialized rhythm -- a musical passage or work in which the rhythmic aspects are controlled by some predetermined series of durations

simple beat -- division of the beat into 2 equal parts

syncopation -- any deliberate disturbance of the normal pulse of meter, accent or rhythm

timed segments -- unmetered music which in measured in minutes and seconds, not beats