

Composition Portfolio 2:

"Window Panes" Score and Annotations

Inspirations and Aesthetic Choices

My composition is an impressionistic piece inspired by the Australian winter and rainfall. In it, I use harmony and modality inspired by the works of Joe Hisaishi, in particular his work on the soundtrack for the 1984 movie "Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind". The arrangement for the main orchestral theme uses strings, piano and woodwinds to produce a harmonically lush and distinctly impressionistic / non-western sound. He plays with polymodal techniques for a flowing quality to the music and the focus on environment in the film is captured by this score. This is what I wanted to capture and emulate for my own composition for this semester.

Some of the creative liberties I took with this piece was incorporating neo-classist rhythmic influences into the work. By using iso-rhythms, motivic rhythmic cells, and other techniques to generate interesting rhythmic displacement, I believed that I could capture the intensity of heavy Australian rains. Although this directly contrasts the nature of rhythmic elasticity typically associated with impressionism, I felt as though it was needed for the piece's intended impact and would not totally effect the impressionistic feel I was going for.

My annotated score can be found on the next page. In it, you'll find the following compositional techniques:

- Use of secundal, quartal and quintal harmony
- Polymodal defined structure
- Unprepared chord extensions
- Rhythmic cells
- Iso-rhythms
- Non-Western harmonic progression

FL *cello alone* *cello returns*

Pno. *pp* *mp*

Vln. *delicately* *ppp*

Vln. *delicately* *ppp*

Vla. *ppp* *mp* *reintroduction of rhythmic motive*

Vc. *pp* *mp* *mf*

Db. *mf*

Planing/parallel movement

Piano recontextualises secundal violin harmony

FL *travels*

Pno.

Vln.

Vln.

Vla. *pp* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Vc. *pp* *mp* *mf*

Db.

Rhythmic Cells with augmented & diminished rhythms

B^b minor harmony with motive resolving to the fourth degree of the B^b Aeolian mode instead of the second degree of the D^b ionian mode results in a new mood & tone

Cello pattern outlines A^b & E^b, making the harmony and melody sound more like it belongs to the E^b Dorian mode (nebulous mode & tone centre)

Change of mode & harmony (transition)

lush quintal harmony

parallel movement

Change of key/mode

Change to a clearly
ionian mode

Change of key/mode

Fl.

Pno.

Vln.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Unexpected, unresolved maj7ⁿ finish
gives a feeling of fluidity and keeps
a sense of finality at bay