
Analytical Parameters in Music

Sound

Source of Sound: Primary instruments, solo or ensemble, voice, electronics

Timbre: Harsh or mellow, combinations, degree of contrast, synthesis

Range: Wide or narrow, tessitura, voicings, special effects

Texture: Dense or thin, homophonic, contrapuntal, monophonic, chordal, doublings

Dynamics: Loud or soft, terraced, graduated, contrasts

Features: Registers, spacing, figures, dissonance, stasis, special effects

Melody

Motion: Stepwise, leaping, flowing or articulated, non-chord tones, chromatic, absent

Contours: Arch shaped, wave shaped, rising, falling, focal tones, pointillistic

Functions: Primary lines, secondary, motive variation techniques, countermelodies

Connections: Overlap, elision, truncation, call and response, relationship of voice parts

Range: Tessitura, vocal or instrumental, concentration of pitches - high, low, centered

Text: Language, poetic meter, phrase length, strophic, verses, choruses, stanzas

Harmony

Pitch Source: Tonal, modal, serial, PC sets, synthetic scales, diatonic, chromatic, non-pitched

Vertical structures: Intervallic content, colors, dissonance vs. consonance

Voicing: Spacing, distribution, inversions, open or close, stability

Movement: Progressions, modulations, sequences, cadences, repose vs. tension

Parts: Linear independence, contrapuntal, imitative, canonic, voice exchange

Rhythm

Meter: Time signature, symmetrical, asymmetrical, mixed, additive, polymeters

Tempo: Pace of pulse, patterns in motives, phrases, groupings

Length: Number of measures, duration in time, balance of sections, proportion

Interactions: Harmonic rhythm, textual rhythm, varied accents, layers, rate of change

Articulations: Short figures, long phrases, syncopation, note values, staccato or legato

Form

Structure: Traditional forms, binary, ternary, rondo, sonata, variations, through-composed

Shape: Repetition, development, recurrence, contrast, symmetry

Growth: Unity, variety, stability, contrast, rate of change, metamorphosis

Balance: Proportions, dimensions, relationship between sections and movements

Impressions: Feelings invoked, satisfactory journey over time, too little, too much?