

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Unmask the Masterpiece: Analyzing Musical Genius for 9th Grade

Deconstruct complex compositions by scrutinizing harmonic tension, socio-political subtext, and avant-garde structural innovations across global musical traditions.

1. In Krzysztof Penderecki's 'Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima', the composer utilizes 'sonorism'. Which analytical observation best describes this technique?

Answer: B) Focusing on specific textures and sound colors rather than melody or harmony

Sonorism is an avant-garde approach where the primary focus is the quality of the sound (timbre, texture, articulation) rather than traditional melodic or harmonic development.

2. When analyzing the _____ in Arvo Pärt's 'Spiegel im Spiegel', listeners observe a 'ringing' effect created by one voice moving stepwise and another playing notes from a tonic triad.

Answer: B) Tintinnabuli style

Tintinnabuli is a minimalist compositional style created by Pärt, inspired by the ringing of bells, characterized by two types of voices: the melodic and the bell-like.

3. True or False: In Claudio Monteverdi's 'L'Orfeo', the use of 'seconda pratica' prioritized musical theory and strict counterpoint over the emotional clarity of the text.

Answer: B) False

False. 'Seconda pratica' actually prioritized the text and emotional expression (the 'oration') over traditional harmonic rules (the 'harmony').

4. The 'Tristan chord' from Richard Wagner's 'Tristan und Isolde' is a landmark in music history primarily because it:

Answer: C) Delayed resolution, heightening harmonic tension and signaling the move toward atonality

The Tristan chord is famous for its ambiguity and lack of immediate resolution, representing a pivotal shift in the breakdown of traditional functional tonality.

5. In Fela Kuti's 'Zombie', the use of _____ functions as a socio-political critique by using repetitive, driving rhythms to symbolize the mindless following of orders.

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Answer: A) Afrobeat polyrhythms

Fela Kuti pioneered Afrobeat, which combines West African musical styles with American jazz and funk, often utilizing heavy polyrhythms to carry political messages.

6. True or False: The concept of 'Aleatoric music', utilized by composers like John Cage, relies on elements of chance or randomness during the performance or composition process.

Answer: A) True

True. Aleatoric music (from the Latin 'alea' for dice) leaves some element of the composition or performance to chance.

7. Dmitri Shostakovich's 'Symphony No. 5' is often analyzed as a 'forced celebration'. What historical context informs this critical evaluation?

Answer: B) It was a response to Soviet pressure for 'optimistic' music after the composer was denounced

The work is viewed as a complex response to the Stalinist regime, appearing to comply with state demands while maintaining hidden layers of irony and sorrow.

8. The use of the _____ in Bulgarian women's choir music, such as 'Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares', creates a distinct tension through the use of close intervals like major and minor seconds.

Answer: B) Diaphonic singing

Diaphonic singing in Bulgarian folk traditions involves two-part singing where the voices create piercing, dissonant intervals that are central to the aesthetic.

9. How does the 'Sprechstimme' technique in Arnold Schoenberg's 'Pierrot Lunaire' challenge traditional vocal appreciation?

Answer: B) It blends speaking and singing, focusing on rising and falling pitch without holding notes

Sprechstimme (speech-voice) is an Expressionist vocal technique that creates an eerie, distorted effect by following the curve of speech while approximating pitches.

10. True or False: In Hindustani classical music, the 'Tala' refers to the melodic framework of the piece, while the 'Raga' refers to the rhythmic cycle.

Answer: B) False

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False. It is the opposite: the 'Raga' is the melodic framework or mode, and the 'Tala' is the rhythmic cycle or beat pattern.