S E R I A L I S M   1

Leftovers: Messiaen – organization of works post 1950 (esp. *Oiseaux exotiques*)

Boulez: *Schoenberg is Dead*

American Serialism:
Presentation: Milton Babbitt, *Composition for Four Instruments*
Babbitt, *Three Compositions for Piano:* 1 (1947)

European Serialism 1:
Darmstadt
Messiaen, *Mode de valeurs et d'intensités* (1949)
Stockhausen, *Kreuzspiel* (1951, rev. 1959)

Next class :
Assignment: 1pg response to Milton Babbitt, "Who Cares if you Listen?"
Serial Stravinsky, including a close reading of the extremely short *Elegy for J.F.K.* (1964)
also, Stravinsky, *Agon* (1957)
Nono, *Il canto sospeso* (1956) (mvmts. 2, 6a+b, [not 7], 9)

Reading:
Morgan, "Stravinsky and Serialism," p. 355–58
Jeannie Ma. Guerrero, "Serial Intervention in Nono's *Il canto sospeso*," *Music Theory Online* 12.1 (February 2006)

1. Nomenclature:
    a. Non-Functional Harmony; Dissonant Diatonicism
    b. Atonality
    c. Twelve-Tone
    d. Serialism, Total Serialism, Integral Serialism, Multiple Serialism, Darmstadt school

2. Pioneers in Serialism (living in italics)
    a. French: Oliver Messiaen, *Pierre Boulez*
    b. Italians: Luigi Nono, Luciano Berio
    c. Germans: *Karlheinz Stockhausen*
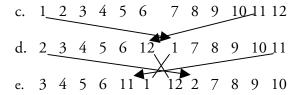   d. Americans: *Milton Babbitt*

3. The Serial Aesthetic
    a. Post-WWII: Embrace music that the Nazis hated.
    b. Why was Schoenberg dead to Boulez?
    c. Atomic music for the atomic age
    d. Virtuosity

4. The Serial Technique
    a. Start with a 12-tone row. Then number all the notes of the row from 1-12 according to their pitch.
       For instance: C=1, C#=2, D=3, etc. to B=12.

b. You now have a row of numbers which represents your twelve-tone row. For instance, it might be: 2 8 7 4 11 1 12 3 9 6 5 10

c. **Note durations**: give each note a value, usually 1-12
d. for example: ♪= 1; ♩= 2; ♩. = 3; ♩ = 4 ♩‿♪= 5; etc. to ♩. = 12
e. Or give a value to each position in the measure, such as:

f. $\frac{3}{4}$ 1 e + a 2 e + a   3 e   +   a
     1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8   9 10 11 12

g. Then either always use the notes (or note positions) in order from 1-12 or use them in the order of the row. So for the row above, "2 8 7 4 11 1 …" the first six durations might be ♪ ♩ ♩‿♪. ♩ ♩‿♪. ♪

h. **Dynamics**: assign each number from 1-12 a dynamic, for instance:
i. *pppp* = 1; *ppp* = 2; *pp* = 3 … etc. to *ffff* = 12. So the row "2 8 7 4 11 1" might have the first four dynamics: *ppp mf (quasi)-mf p fff pppp*
j. Since 12 dynamics are hard to distinguish, many composers just used 6.
k. **Octave**: assign different octaves to different pitches. On a piano piece, you might use 6 octaves, etc.
l. **Articulation**: create 12 different articulations, one for each number of the row.
m. **Timbres:** have 12 different instruments or at least 12 different sounds (i.e., violin bowed, pizz., col legno would be 3). Assign a different timbre to each note of the row.

5. Application of Serialism: Stockhausen, *Kreuzspiel* (Cross Play) 1951
   a. Two rows: one complex, one 1–12
   b. Unusual Row rotation:

   c. 1 2 3 4 5 6   7 8 9 10 11 12

   d. 2 3 4 5 6 12   1 7 8 9 10 11

   e. 3 4 5 6 11 1   12 2 7 8 9 10

   f. Six pitches in the highest register, six in the lowest
   g. A combination of elements that are not (easily?) audible and a few that can be heard, along with interesting timbres and a continuous pulse (unusual)

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       1           2           3           4           5           6           7
m.     123456789TEV123456789TEV123456789TEV123456789TEV123456789TEV123456789TEV123456
-----+-----------+-----------+-----------+-----------+-----------+-----------+-----
14.1: 2 8       7 |   4   E |       1V  |       3 9         6 | 5    T    |
      |           |         |           |           |           |           |
20.7: 8       7   | 4   E * |     1T    |   2 V     |     3 9 | *   6     |5
      |           |         |           |           |           |           |
27.1: 7     *4  E|         15|  2  T    |    8      |V   *       3 9       6|
      |           |         |           |           |           |           |
33.7: 4    E    * |  16      8 |     T   |    2 5    7|    V      |     3 9 |  *
      |           |         |           |           |           |           |
40.1: E         19         T* |      7   | 5     8  *| 6    2 4| V       | 3
      |           |         |           |           |           |           |
46.7: 12 3  4    5 | 6      7 |  8       9      *  T |     E    |     V    |    *
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