

Suite Francaise for Band
Composed by: Darius Milhaud

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MUS 359 – Instrumental Methods
Spring 2014

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Targeted Concept:

This piece will be a tool to teach ensemble playing and listening around the ensemble to match pitch, style, and internal pulse.

Learning Goals:

1. Students will develop and strengthen triple subdivision skills based on meter through the first and second movement to a level in which meters with a triple subdivision become internal.
2. Students will understand all vocabulary in the glossary through in-class exploration as well as the worksheet and will have the mastery to appropriately use the words in relation to other music when applicable.
3. Students will have an understanding of the composer and history of piece through in class discussion and worksheets in order for students to have an understanding of what they are playing.
4. Students will perform individual parts on instrument without mistake to the individual's highest playing ability and with understanding of how part fits into ensemble through rehearsal time and listening assignment.
5. Students will improvise with the same purpose of Milhaud's writing through means of assignment titled "How Milhaud are you?"

Historical Notes:

Darius Milhaud was born in Aix-en-Provence, France in 1892 and lived until 1974. At the age of eight, Milhaud began taking violin lessons and started his life as a composer around age seventeen. Studying at the Paris Conservatory was Milhaud's next step in his life and where he developed his composition skills further. At this time, he was also part of a group of six young, French composers known as Les Six. Included in Les Six are the following members: Darius Milhaud, Georges Auric, Louis Durey, Arthur Honegger, Germaine Tailleferre, and Francis Poulenc. Milhaud developed his appreciation for Brazilian folk music in 1917-1918 when he travelled to Rio de Janeiro with Paul Claudel, a friend he met a few years earlier. In 1941, Milhaud decided to move to America to teach composition at Mills College in California. America is where he discovered his appreciation for jazz music although he had been exposed to it earlier. Throughout the rest of his life, he would spend time teaching at Mills and also as an honorary professor of composition at the Paris Conservatory.

Milhaud explored all mediums for which he could compose including the following: stage, orchestra, choral, chamber, and piano music. Ballets and operas were among his most well known works. *La Création du Monde* (1923) and *Le Boeuf sur le toit* (1920) fall among the popular ballets, and *Christophe Colomb* (1928) is one of the most popular operas. Band and orchestral literature did not gain as much popularity as his ballets and operas. *Suite Provencale* (1937) was an orchestral piece written about only one city in France. Polytonality in his writing is another aspect he is well known for as well as ensuring there are French characteristics throughout many pieces.

Suite Francaise (1944) is less popular than *Suite Provencale*, and *Suite Francaise* has each movement depicting a different French region. These regions include five French Provinces that are throughout France but tend to be spaced around the outer region of the country. In order of presentation in the suite, the five Provinces are Normandy, Brittany, Ile-de-France, Alsace-Lorraine, and Provence. This idea was to help preserve Milhaud's view of the importance of French culture and folk songs as well as convey his worry for this country in the time of war. Leeds Music Company is responsible for this composition as they commissioned *Suite Francaise* as an attempt to make a collection of contemporary composers' music. In 1945, the Goldman Band had the debut performance of Milhaud's piece.

Glossary of Musical Terms:

Accent: a mark used to let the performer know that the note(s) should stand out from the others surrounding the note, usually accomplished through note(s) being slightly bigger or having more space around them

Anime: to be performed in a lively manner

Arco: use of the bow on a stringed instrument

A tempo: original tempo

a 2: two players should be playing the part

Crescendo: gradual increase in volume level of sound

Cut time: time that is felt in half; typically has two large beats per measure

Decrescendo: gradual decrease in volume level of sound

Divisi: Divides a group or section to play a different part than others. Used often to create harmony as well as to condense parts (such as C12 and C13) onto the same physical part

(Eighth note = 116) in 6/8 time: each eighth note in the bar will be moving at a conducted tempo of 160 beats per minute

Espressivo: having expression in the music

Fermata: a note or rest that is held past its written value

Forte: big volume level

Fortissimo: bigger volume level

Gliss: slide from one pitch to another, typically done on trombone but does not need to be

Grace notes: ornamentation notes typically within a melody

Lento: also seen as Lento, or slowly

Mezzo forte: medium-large volume level

Mezzo piano: medium-small volume level

Molto ritardando: slow down very much

Open: without a mute

Pianissimo: to be played more quietly

Piano: to be played quietly

Pizz: pizzicato, pluck strings of instrument with fingers

Rallentando: a signal for the tempo to relax

Ritardano: slow down

Slur: shows that notes should move without being rearticulated

Soli: numerous solos

Solo: to play by oneself

Staccato: shorter note value; has different meaning based upon style of piece

Tenuto: ensure the note has its full value

Tie: shows the value of a note

Unison: voices playing same part

Vif (half note = 112): Lively or vibrant tempo

Name: _____

Listening Assignment

Goal: Engage critical listening skills to understand how individual parts interact with each other throughout the movement.

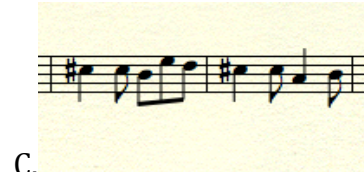
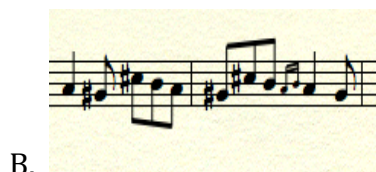
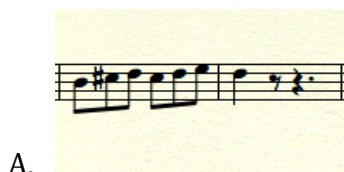
Directions: Please utilize the recording of *Suite Francaise* from the uploaded version on Niihka which comes from the CD entitled *Musique des equipages de la flotte de Toulon* conducted by Gerard Besse.

This listening assignment will focus on movement two: *Bretagne*.

1. The tempo mark at the beginning of this movement is "Lent."
 - a. Listen to *Bretagne* and describe in your own words what you feel this means utilizing musical vocabulary in your two sentence explanation.
 - b. If "Lent" is synonymous with the more widely used term *lento*, which typically means 'slowly,' do you agree with Milhaud's label for this movement? Why or why not?
2. Listening for the part you play, please circle as many as apply to your perception of your role in the ensemble in the following spots. Justify your reasoning below circle.
 - a. Measure 15-25 (1:02 – 1:41)

Melody Harmony for melody Not Playing for some/all Support Background

3. Which of the following is the most frequent response after an idea is stated? Listen while you follow along with your music for measures such as mm 5-6 or mm 25-26. Name the two instruments that have this the most often.



4. Listen to measure 27 – 38 (1:47-2:27). Describe what happens in the music. How does this melody develop, and what musical techniques are utilized to ensure that happens.

Evaluation of Listening:

____/5 – Completion of assignment

____/5 – Answers are in a form that follows given directions

Each Y is worth 1 point.

Question 1:

Y/N – Does student use two sentences?

Comments:

Y/N – Does student use appropriate language?

Comments:

Y/N – Does student support answers with evidence of listening and evaluating piece?

Comments:

Question 2:

Y/N – Does student show that they have analyzed how his/her part fits into texture?

Comments:

Y/N – Does student justify circles?

Comments:

Question 3:

Y/N – Does student correctly identify which response is stated?

Comments:

Y/N – Does student correctly name two instruments that frequently play the response?

Comments:

Question 4:

Y/N – Does student accurately describe what happens in the music?

Comments:

Y/N – Does student use musical vocabulary to define what is going on in music?

Comments:

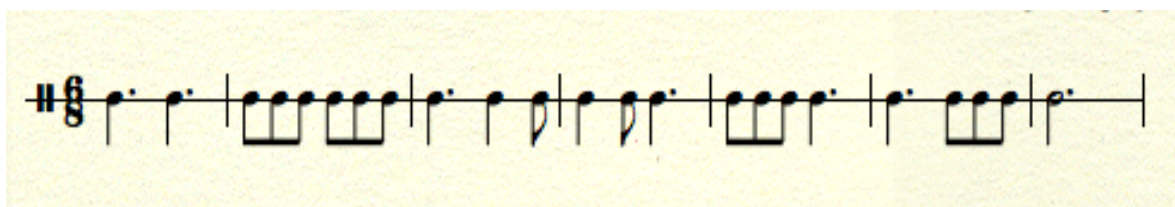
Name: _____

Practicing Assignment

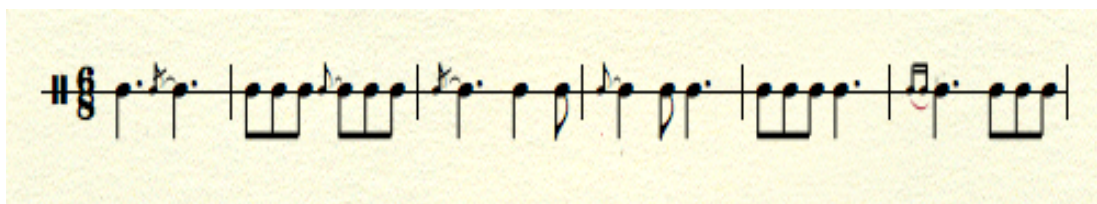
Goal: Mastery of individual part so that ensemble time can be used as ensemble time instead of individual practice time.

Directions: Please follow this guide to practicing as you work on movement 2: *Bretagne*.

1. Play the concert D scale holding each note for 6 slow counts
 - a. Play the concert D scale again while listening to the tone you are creating
 - b. Play the concert D scale again while singing the notes in your head
 - c. Play the concert D scale again while making sure you are creating your best sound
 - d. Play the concert D scale again while thinking about the above three things
 - e. Repeat for E minor and B minor



2.
 - a. Write in the counts using 1 2 3 4 5 6 but make **1** and **4** bold.
 - b. Count and clap whole rhythm
 - c. Count and clap while lightly tapping your foot on the bold **1** and **4**.
 - d. Vary tempi
 - e. Play through rhythm using a concert Bb.
- 3.



- a. Clap rhythm without grace notes (should look similar)
- b. Clap rhythm and since grace notes
- c. Play rhythm on concert D and have the grace notes be sung in head
- d. Play rhythm on concert D and have grace notes be played on concert E
- e. Make sure that all the notes are getting their allotted value despite the grace notes

4. Cannon with a partner. Person 1 starts by clapping two dotted quarter notes in one bar in 6/8 time. Person 2 enters by repeated the last measure that person 1 clapped. Person 2 must pay attention to what person 1 does as person 2 will be clapping person 1's composition but one bar later. The goal of this practice technique is for both partners to feel comfortable with 6/8 time and to internalize that triple subdivision.
 - a. Think you're advanced? Add some grace notes! Have person 2 enter after two whole measures.
5. Clap through rhythmic sections of individual parts
6. Play through rhythmic sections of individual parts
7. Perform passages of piece at snail speed in order to make sure that you are producing the best tone possible. Speed up as necessary.
8. List two ways you can improve your tone quality
 - 1.
 - 2.
9. List two ways you can improve your sense of time and/or articulation
 - 1.
 - 2.
10. Below, write three skills that were perfected during this practice session.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Name: _____

Assessment for Practicing Activity

Student answered questions using logic, thought, and reflection 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

Student made an effort to improve on music through at home practice 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

Student is able to improvise a 6/8 rhythm through clapping when signaled 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

Student has grasped an understanding of how grace notes fit into music 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

Student will have spent time with their tone and improvement should be made 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

Name: _____

Suite Francaise

Define the following:

Divisi:

Gliss:

Grace notes:

Lent:

Short Answer

1. Why are three ways that you can ensure you are within the ensemble sound without playing timidly?

2 Describe each movement of the suite utilizing musical vocabulary. This should be no less than three sentences each.

Movement 1:

Movement 2:

Movement 3:

Movement 4:

Movement 5:

Name: _____

Assessment for worksheet:

Divisi defined correctly? ____/3

Gliss defined correctly? ____/3

Grace notes defined correctly? ____/3

Lent defined correctly? ____/3

Students give critical analysis of short answer questions in three or more sentences each?

Comments: _____/6

Student self-evaluation: Students will be asked the answer to this question on the back of the worksheet which will also have the rubric and students will score themselves.

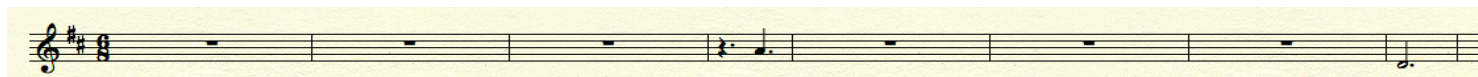
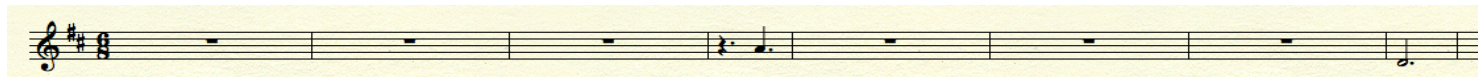
Did you put in the time and effort to do this worksheet to your highest potential?

Which movement was your favorite? Why?

Total: ____/12

Goal: Improvise and work together with a partner to compose an expert Milhaud would think resembled his writing. This assignment will be continued in class when you will need to combine your creation(s) with others to create a larger composition. Pitch matching and listening to create a product where all voices have a chance to be heard will integral in this challenge.

1. Write about the memory you are going to improvise about for this assignment.
2. Feel like you're new to improvising? Perfect! Here are some helpful hints.
 - a. Think about the idea of call and response (or question and answer).
 - b. Think about melodic development. Your initial statement might be "Tri-po-let Ta-I," and your next statement could build off of that into "Tri-po-let, Ta ti, Ta-i." Let each statement grow off of the previous.
 - c. With the time signature of 6/8 in mind and your head subdividing in triplets, use only the notes in the D Major pentatonic scale. In concert pitch, the notes are as follows: D, E, F#, A, and B.
 - d. To get you started with eight bar melodies, look at the following example.
3. Write out eight of your improvised melodies (after trying them out on your instrument) below.



4. Circle which melody was your favorite and best represented the memory of your town. Why was this your favorite? Musically, what made it work well? Did you melody develop at all?

5. Was this your first time improvising? If yes, how was it? If no, where else have you been improvising? (Yes, noodling at home counts!)