

21M.260: STRAVINSKY TO THE PRESENT

Class 17: April 12

AGENDA

Warm-up: Thoughts about technology by Russolo, Varèse, and Stockhausen

- Luigi Russolo, "The Art of Noises" (1913)
- Edgard Varèse, "The Liberation of Sound" (1936/1939)
- Karlheinz Stockhausen, "The Concept of Unity in Electronic Music" (1962)
- Major ideas and their application to that composer's works and to the later anthology works

Davidovsky and Saariaho: relationships between electronics and analog instruments

- Tape (coordination) vs. live electronics (responsive)
- Comparing the characteristic styles of each piece with reference to particular parameters (timbre, texture, gesture, rhythm/meter).
- How will we tell them apart?

History of electronic music of various types:

- Engineering and experimentation
- French found sounds
- German synthesized music
- Institutional support
- Composition as a lab science?

Supplemental: Russolo, Antheil, Varèse, Stockhausen

- The question of listener appeal vs. technical interest

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WARM-UP

For this warm-up, you will read an excerpt from one of three of the composers whose music you listened to for the supplemental listening – Russolo, Varèse, or Stockhausen. It will not be necessary to read and understand every word, but to get a general sense of the writer's ideas and summarize them for the class as a whole.

1. Take notes here on the main ideas emphasized in the writing.
2. What is the most important idea or innovation in the essay with specific reference to the topic of technology and electronic music? Why is it important?
3. When you think back on your experience listening to *Risveglio di una Città*, *Hyperprism* and *Poème électronique*, or *Gesang der Jünglinge* (as applicable), what specific aspects of that supplemental work are explained well by reference to the composers' ideas? Are there also ideas that are not well represented in these particular examples?
4. Each of these artists was an important predecessor for the anthology composers Davidovsky and Saariaho. Identify one or two ideas from the essays that appear to have come to fruition in one or both of the anthology works.

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Spring 2016

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