

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

PERFORMANCE PIECE

TITLE Sonata II in E1 major, II (Siciliano)

COMPOSER J. S. Bach

PERIOD/DATE OF COMPOSITION Baroque

WHAT IS THE STYLE OF THE COMPOSITION AND ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE STYLE?

My performance piece was written in the Baroque era. Some general characteristics of Baroque Music are:

MELODY: A single melodic idea with long melodies. Harmony - tonic to dominant modulations, or tonic to relative minor/major. The Basso Continuo (Figured Bass).

RHYTHM: Continuous rhythmic drive. Steady tempo and consistent metre with ritard at end and repetition of rhythmic patterns. There is much energy in the rhythm.

TEXTURE: Balance of Homophonic (melody with chordal harmony) and polyphonic textures.

TIMBRE: Orchestral – sometimes strings, wind and harpsichord with very little percussion.

DYNAMICS: Abrupt shifts from loud to soft - achieved in an orchestral sense by adding or subtracting instruments.

ORNAMENTS: These are generally placed before the penultimate note in a bar.

Ornaments such as appoggiaturas - chromatic passing notes - were used more frequently.

An overall characteristic of Baroque Music is that a single musical piece tends to project a single mood or expression of feeling.

HOW DOES THE COMPOSER USE THE INSTRUMENT IN THE PIECE?

The composer does fairly well to exploit the flute in this piece. One of the strengths of the flute is the wide range of notes it is capable of reaching with ease, in this piece, which spans two octaves. The flute is also capable of performing ornaments at speed and these are used in the piece. There are no special performing techniques, such as double or flutter tonguing, as these were unable to be performed on typical Baroque instruments.

HAS MY PIECE BEEN ARRANGED FOR MY INSTRUMENT? IF SO, WRITE ABOUT THE ARRANGEMENT.

My piece was written by J. S. Bach specifically for the flute and has not been arranged in any way.

IS MY PIECE PART OF AN ENSEMBLE? IF SO, HOW DOES IT CONTRIBUTE TO THE ENSEMBLE?

My piece is not part of an ensemble.

COMPARATIVE PIECES

1. TITLE ~ Sonata I in B minor, III

COMPOSER ~ Sonata II in E1 major, I

2. TITLE ~ J. S. Bach

COMPOSER ~ J. S. Bach

WHAT SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES ARE THERE BETWEEN MY PERFORMANCE PIECE AND MY COMPARATIVE PIECES?

Similarities

- ✳ Both my performance piece and my comparative pieces are written in the same form - ternary (ABA)
- ✳ All pieces use patterns in semiquavers / quavers
- ✳ All use scale and / or arpeggio runs
- ✳ All use trills on one or more penultimate phrases
- ✳ Same sort of dynamic structure
- ✳ Use many accidentals

Differences

- ⊗ All have different time signatures
- ⊗ All have different key signatures

MY PERFORMANCE

COMPOSITION BRIEF

HOW DOES MY COMPOSITION RELATE TO THE PIECES I HAVE STUDIED?

My composition is in the style of J. S. Bach. My aim was to use features that the three studied pieces of Bach used. The features are the same as the ones that have been used in my performance piece:

- ⊗ Fast harmonic rhythm
- ⊗ Scale / arpeggio runs
- ⊗ Patterns and phrases containing the same rhythms

WHAT INSTRUMENTAL TECHNIQUES HAVE I USED IN MY COMPOSITION PIECE?

Some of the instrumental techniques that I have used in my composition are

- ⊗ Ornaments on the penultimate notes of phrases- the flute is particularly able to perform these, especially at a high speed which enhances the sound of the piece overall
- ⊗ Scales / arpeggio runs - the flute would have been the only instrument of the Baroque era that would have been agile enough to be able to perform these sorts of things
- ⊗ Octave displacements

HOW DID MY INTENTIONS CHANGE DURING THE COMPOSITION OF MY PIECE?

I did not originally plan to make my piece into ABA form. Other than that, I did not change my intentions during the composition of my piece.

COMPOSITION APPRAISAL

HOW SUCCESSFUL WAS MY COMPOSITION IN ACHIEVING WHAT I WANTED TO DO?

I think my composition in the style of J. S Bach is successful because it sounds fairly convincing and I have tried to use elements typical to that time. Some of the sections of my piece are not quite as I would have liked them to be, but overall, I am happy with my composition because of the way it sounds. I think to improve upon it I could have added a simple piano accompaniment to it, as most Baroque pieces involved a harpsichord, as that was what was typical to that era. I could have also have improved upon the textures in my piece, as in the Baroque era, music was generally polyphonic. I think that I have created an authentic melody - in Baroque music this was generally decorated with trills and mordents and with constantly moving sequences and much repetition. There is much tension and dissonance as a result of polyphonic lines, and this is usually resolved quickly.

HOW DOES MY COMPOSITION RELATE TO THE COMPARATIVE PIECES AND PERFORMANCE PIECE I HAVE STUDIED?

I have tried to imitate features and elements that my performance and comparative pieces have, such as octave displacements, ornaments on the penultimate notes of phrases. My studied three pieces also use fragments of scales and arpeggios in patterns and I have tried to use these to make my composition sound authentic. I think that my piece makes a valid contribution to the Baroque genre because I think it sounds realistic. I think my piece is successful because I have tried to base it quite strongly upon by three studied pieces.