

“The ‘California School’ Examination” performed at the Intermuse Colloquium, University of South Florida, Tampa [January 1976]

Directions: This examination is intended to test individual and collective aptitude for musical composition according to standards established by composers of the “California School.” Residence in the state of California is not a prerequisite for participation in the activities of the School.

The examination is in two parts: verbal and mathematical. All answers to test questions should be expressed as musical events. It is not assumed that any participant will possess professional expertise, nor would this necessarily be helpful in answering test questions. Move at your own pace through the examination, but **DO NOT LINGER OVER DIFFICULT QUESTIONS**. If you cannot think of an answer, skip the question and go on to the next one. If you finish before the time limit is reached, you may go back to complete questions which you have left unanswered.

Please do all figuring in the text booklet. If you have any questions about any of the material covered by the examination, please consult the monitor at the rear of the testing area.

When the monitor has signaled the end of the test period, you will be given one additional minute to add your signature. You may keep your copy of this test booklet.

THERE WILL BE NO SMOKING DURING THE TESTING PERIOD

Do not open the test booklet until told to do so.

PART ONE Verbal Skills Test

First Question: (this question has two parts; read the brief essay and examine the supplemental Tables which accompany it, then create musical answers to the two parts of the question)

One day, Mr. Le Master, a significant but little-known composer, showed his pupil, Fritz, how to achieve musical results from the briefest and most humble of musical materials. His teaching model was an excerpt from “The Happy Farmer” by Robert Schumann (see supplemental Tables).

Several of the scientific aids employed by Le Master in making Modern Music from Schumann’s work may be found in the supplemental Tables below. To enhance the somewhat old-fashioned quality of Schumann’s melodic line, Le Master applied the Schillinger interval expansion technique, where each melodic

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interval of the model is expanded by a consistent number of semitones (one semitone in the Tables), to the Schumann excerpt. By using Jazz substitute chords in place of Schumann's (see Tables), Le Master created harmonies which were more subtle and alluring than the original ones. He then improved the rhythms by applying the perpetual variation principle, where no attack placements are repeated, to each measure of the model. Finally, he added a touch of freshness and spice to the whole by providing each different pitch of "The Happy Farmer" (by measure) with a different timbre or mode of attack.

Fritz, who had recently fallen under the spell of John Cage, and was, therefore, sometimes a burden to his teacher, suggested the following revisions to Le Master's format: first, only one pitch and each recurrence of that pitch from "The Happy Farmer" was to be subject to distortion at all--the other pitches would be replaced by Silence; second, only the eleventh through twenty-third harmonic partials of the pitch to be distorted would be available as substitute pitch material. Otherwise, Fritz's format was like that of his teacher.

1. Using Mr. Le Master's format, make a Modern version of "The Happy Farmer."
2. Make a second version of "The Happy Farmer" with the help of Fritz's format.

Supplemental Tables

- A. Schumann's Score
- B. Three Jazz substitution chords each for F, Bb & C
- C. Schillinger interval expansions (by m2nd) for each interval of "The Happy Farmer" tune
- D. Upper partials of the fundamental F
- E. Perpetual variation principle applied to: 1) rhythmic cells; 2) meter

Question two: (There are four parts to this question; read the essay then answer each part separately)

There are three basic approaches to the problem of choosing material for a work of art. Mr. Le Master believes that all three may have some utility.

The first approach consists of directly referring to, depending upon, or actually quoting from, pre-existing art works. Arnold, a well-known Austrian composer, might be said to be an exponent of this category of selection. In choosing the material for his celebrated string quartets, for example, Arnold first perused a

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substantial body of significant works in that genre, informed himself of their important material components, then proceeded to write Masterpieces of his own. Generally speaking, this approach, which consciously seeks to maintain a sense of historical continuity from one generation to another, can be said to be represented by the slogan: ART IS THE PROFOUNDEST EXPRESSION OF MAN'S COLLECTIVE MIND AT ANY MOMENT IN HISTORY; HONOR THE PAST, HONOR THYSELF.

The second approach to the selection of material assumes that the artist will rely solely upon inner-generated materials; that is, materials which, regardless of their diverse origins, are so thoroughly distilled through the mind and spirit of the artist that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to explicate their various discrete esthetic and technical sources. Claude, a French painter, is an exponent of this type of selection. Although trained by advocates of the historical approach, he chose to honor personal taste and intuition without regard for whether they conflicted with tastes of his peers or predecessors. Claude's art might be summarized by the slogan: ART IS THE INDIVIDUAL'S RECORD OF HIS QUEST FOR BEAUTY; THE ARTIST'S FIRST RESPONSIBILITY IS TO HIS OWN VISION.

A third approach permits the artist to utilize various choice-making devices, such as dice, or coins, in selecting the material he uses. John, an American poet, is an exponent of this class of material selection. He finds words and sound materials for his poems by means of various kinds of "choice machines" which he devises. One such "machine" requires John to fill a balloon with paint, tie this to another balloon filled with helium, release both over a copy of the *National Review* and shoot them down with a twelve gauge shotgun, thus releasing paint in random fashion over the surface of one or two pages of the periodical. Those words, or letters, which are still completely legible become the material for a poem. On certain days, when the wind is unpredictable, John must use entire pages.

1. Express the material below which seems most closely related to John's attitude toward the selection of material for a work of art:

a-C-D-D#-F#-G-A-C#-B-E-G#-A

b-Sharp short timbres and a long soft tone

c-A point, an ostinato & a line

2. Express the material below which seems the most likely source of inspiration to Arnold:

a. G4-F#5-C5-B5-A#4-D5-E4-F4-Eb5-Db4

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- b. Hum your favorite note
 - c. Quarter note-quarter note triplet-16th note rest-sixteenth note-repeat of same values
 - d. Throw darts from various distances at your favorite brand of onion skin paper
3. Express Mr. Le Master's approach to material selection in a short essay formed from material of your own choosing.
4. Claude's attitude suggests that he wishes music to profoundly affect him in some physical way. Try to express yourself in some way which produces such a result. If you achieve no result through self-expression, remain silent and listen for awhile. Sometimes this produces the desired effect.

Question Three:

John Cage once made recipe for the famous Mexican festival dish, Mole Poblano. This elaborate concoction requires three days' work, if it is to be prepared correctly. Since it contains a very large number of ingredients, the women of Puebla (the city from which the dish originates) have historically found it most convenient to divide the ingredients into categories before shopping, so that they will have time to prepare the other meals for each day, while also processing the Poblano, before their husbands return home from work.

John Cage found this convenient method of keeping everything straight so attractive that he too made use of it while shopping for ingredients. Indeed, his approach to the preparation of Mole Poblano was traditional in all respects save one: he determined the proportions of the various ingredients to be used by means of the I Ching, or Book of Changes.

The contents of the dish may be divided into categories as follows: 1-meat and meat products; 2-spices; 3-paste; 4-nuts or seeds; 5-vegetables; and, 6-fruits. Here is Cage's recipe:

1 pork loin; 3 turkeys cut in 8 pieces; ½ chicken breast
½ cup ground cinnamon; 16 oz. unsweetened chocolate; ¼ cup ground
black pepper; 1 Tbsp ground cloves; ¼ tsp ground coriander;
3 tbsp. suet; 1/3 cup of lard; 1/3 cup chicken stock
1 cup sesame seeds; 4 tsp blanched almonds; 6 Tbsp anise seeds
4 cloves garlic finely chopped; 12 ancho chilies; 16 pasilla chilies;
31 mulato chilies; 7 coarsely chopped onions; 6 ½ tomatoes;
8 seedless raisins

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Using John Cage's mole poblano recipe as a starting point, create a composition by converting the various traditional food categories given above into categories of musical material (for eg. Meat=quintal five note chord, where pork=tertian five note chord; chicken=secundal five note chord, etc.; or, spices=brief flurry of notes, where coriander=very high flurry, etc.) Read through the recipe using Cage's proportions as expressions of time (in seconds) on a scale of 1 teaspoon = quarter note at mm. 60.

(one cup=8 oz.; 8 Tbsp=1/2 cup; 3 tsp=1 Tbsp)

THIS CONCLUDES SECTION ONE OF THE 'CALIFORNIA SCHOOL' EXAMINATION. IF YOU HAVE NOT COMPLETED SECTION I, STOP NOW AND GO ON TO SECTION II. YOU MAY RETURN TO SECTION I LATER IF TIME PERMITS.

Part II: MATH SKILLS TEST

First Question

Mr. Le Master is making a coffin for Karlheinz Stockhausen. He wishes to decorate it with four different kinds of material. Le Master already has three large pieces of material A, and so has decided to purchase several smaller pieces of three other kinds of material, which he intends to use in alternation with large A pieces. He has decided, in accordance with the canons of Palladio, that the secondary motifs should be repeated in a symmetrical formation of some kind.

While adhering to the structural guidelines formulated above, construct a musical version of Le Master's Palladian coffin---where wood and metal=distinct musical gestures (such as a single low, soft tone or a loud, rapid flurry of notes) which utilize the least possible number of pieces of material.

Second Question

The people of the famous city of San Francisco have decided to erect a monument to Seiji Ozawa, the famous conductor of their famous symphony orchestra. The monument is to take the form of a baton-shaped hole large enough to contain a garden restaurant and parking garage.

Forty-two loudspeakers will be placed throughout the area of the hole. These loudspeakers will alternately play snatches of from the Standard Repertoire, or, the spoken English word "I" (or its Japanese homonym "ai" [love]). The speakers will be arranged in consecutive rings along the longitudinal axis of the hole. They will be so mounted that each is capable of rotating a full 360 degrees every seven minutes and forty-four seconds. There will be seven rings of six speakers each.

The words "I" and "ai," which are to emanate from each loudspeaker from time to time, will be alternated automatically in every ring. The English word will be

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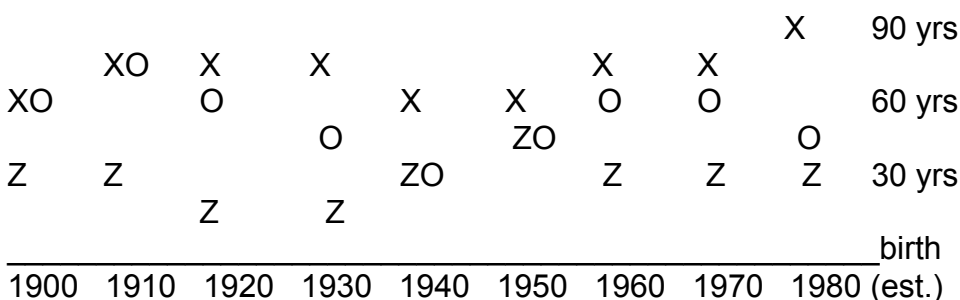
repeated for periods of exactly fourteen seconds, while the Japanese homonym will be repeated for fifteen seconds on each hearing. The snatches of Standard Repertoire, which are to alternate with the above words, will be heard for units of time ranging from two to ten seconds.

All sounds will begin in the ring of loudspeakers at the south end of the baton-shaped hole (near the main entrance of the garden restaurant) and move gradually to the last ring at the northern end. The elapsed time involved in the process of moving the sound from one end of the hole to the other will coincide exactly with the time required for each speaker to rotate 360 degrees (7:44). The three northern rings of speakers will rotate clockwise, beginning at “twelve o’clock,” “three o’clock,” and “six o’clock” respectively. The four southern rings of speakers will rotate counter-clockwise, beginning at “nine o’clock,” “twelve o’clock,” “three o’clock,” and “six o’clock” moving from north to south.

Imagine you are a speaker somewhere in this grand monument. Write a complete sound cycle for your loudspeaker position within a time period corresponding to one complete rotation of your speaker.

Third Question [read the graph and answer the three questions which follow it]

GRAPH OF LIFE EXPECTANCY OF AMERICAN MUSIC CRITICS,
 COMPOSERS, AND CHILD PRODIGY PERFORMERS FOR EACH DECADE
 SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY



X=CRITICS
 O=COMPOSERS
 Z=PRODIGIES

1-During certain periods in this century, the life expectancy of American music critics was higher than the median age, at death, of the average American composer. If one year = quarter note at mm 60, express the temporal relationship between these periods, reading across the graph from 1900 to 1980.

2-Honor America’s composers by expressing the graph musically in such a way that only silence fills those years in which critics outlived composers.

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3-Considering one year as equivalent to one beat [of any length], choose and express musically the sequence from among those listed below that most closely corresponds to the years in which the average life expectancy for composers was on the increase:

- a) 1900-20 1925-35 1952-60
- b) 1905-25 1943-62
- c) 1900-20 1920-23 1927-30 1943-67
- d) 1905-10 1920-22 1945-66

Fourth Question [read the tables and answer the three questions which follow]

SILENCE	10%	20%	27%	30%	10%	1%	3%
PITCHES	60%	50%	65%	40%	87%	89%	94%
NOISE	10%	30%	8%	25%	3%	10%	3%

	Brown	Cage	Feldman	Wolff	Webern	Berg
Schoenberg						

N.B. This table shows the relative amounts of silence, pitch and noise in the works of the composers indicated:

1-Express the average percentage relationships found in works by Cage and his "School."

2- Compose a brief version of "The Happy Farmer" based upon the percentages of pitch, noise and silence found in the works of that composer who uses the greatest amount of silence in his music. Noise should consist principally of appropriate barnyard sounds.

3- The "Golden Section," an ideal proportional relationship expressed by the ratio of 1:1.816, has been used by artists and composers since time immemorial as a means of achieving a harmonious equilibrium in their work. Find the composer in this table whose use of sound and silence most closely corresponds to the proportions of the "Golden Section" and express the percentage relationships characteristic of his work.

WHEN THE MONITOR SIGNALS THAT THE TEST PERIOD IS OVER, YOU MUST CONCEIVE, THEN RECORD, YOUR MUSICAL SIGNATURE. YOU HAVE ONE MINUTE IN WHICH TO DO THIS.