

Jazz-inspired classical music – November 29, 2017

George Gershwin, *Rhapsody in Blue* for solo piano and jazz band (1924)

Rhapsody – A one-movement work that is usually free-flowing and moves between different episodes (or themes or moods) in a way that seems improvisatory

Examples of rhapsodies

Franz Liszt, *Hungarian Rhapsodies* for piano (1846-53)

Maurice Ravel, *Rapsodie espagnole* for orchestra (1907-08)

Claude Debussy, *Première rhapsodie* for clarinet and orchestra (1909-10)

Sergei Rachmaninoff, *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*, Op. 43 (1934)

Concerto – A work for a soloist accompanied by an orchestra, usually in three movements

Example of a concerto from this semester:

Tōru Takemitsu (1930-96), *November Steps* for shakuhachi, biwa, and orchestra (1967)

Leonard Bernstein, *Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs* for solo clarinet and jazz band (1949)

Prelude – A short, introductory piece of music that can take any form. Preludes are found before longer movements, before acts of an opera, or in plays/theater. In the Baroque era (1600-1750), preludes were usually improvised.

Fugue – A compositional technique in which a composer creates a piece of music built upon a theme (short melody called the “subject”) with two or more voices (meaning, lines of music) that are imitative. It was a common technique in the Baroque era and is used in modern music education as a way to develop the technique of counterpoint.

Example of a prelude and fugue:

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), Well-Tempered Clavier, Prelude and Fugue No. 2 in C minor

Riff – A musical nickname for a short, repeated melodic gesture that’s fun to play, usually a little challenging to play, is catchy, and inspires the rest of a piece. It’s a term usually found in jazz, rock, or funk. Another nickname is “lick.”

William Grant Still, Symphony No. 1 in A-flat Major “Afro-American” (1930)

Symphony – A major work for orchestra, usually in four movements, that developed during the Classical era (1750-1800). Pieces can last from 20 minutes to over an hour, and they are usually the anchor of a concert program.

Other major symphony composers:

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-91)

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-47)

Robert Schumann (1810-56)

Anton Bruckner (1824-96)

Alexander Borodin (1833-87)

Johannes Brahms (1833-97)

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-93)

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

Carl Nielsen (1865-1931)

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

Bohuslav Martinů (1890-1959)

Roger Sessions (1896-1985)

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-75)