

Analysis #1: Ballet

Name: _____

Musical analysis, like all analysis, is made up of two things:

Analysis = Description + “So what”

For this in-class writing, you’re going to explore three examples of dance music like a musicologist would: by analyzing what you see and hear.

You’ll be graded on your ability to do both of these things effectively (see rubric).

The prompt

One kind of dance music that we haven’t yet touched upon in our discussion of music and dance is ballet.

In class, we will watch three videos of ballets (you will have the opportunity to watch these again outside of class, if you wish). Each of them is by a different composer, living in a different country, at a different time. One thing they have in common is that they each depict idealized versions of the past—they’re each an escape from the point in time the composer and their audiences lived into an imagined version of the past:

- Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, *Sleeping Beauty*, Act III Pas de deux (1890)
- Igor Stravinsky, *Rite of Spring*, opening (1913)
- Aaron Copland, *Appalachian Spring*, opening (1944)

Part I: Description

Make note of as many details that you hear in these pieces (just like you did for your soundscape journal) as well as visual images (colors, gestures, shapes) you see in the ballet that *reinforce* what you hear (i.e., only the things that bring the sounds you’re hearing to life).

Part II: “So what”

Your next piece of writing should explore whatever ideas the details you notice in these different pieces of music set in motion for you—musical features, visual features, your previous, historical knowledge, knowledge from our online discussions (music education, music and the brain, musicking), etc.

Think, too, about how we’ve begun to look at music from the perspective of different music professionals (composer, performers, ethno/musicologist, arts administrator) and how we’ve begun to ask probing, meaningful questions about each piece of music we encounter.

One more thing! Give your overall writing a title!

Title	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
A strong/good title is engaging, accurate, avoids clichés, and is not too long.					

Part I: Description (60 points)

<u>Piece #1: Tchaikovsky</u>					
Description of specific musical features (at least 5)	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10

A strong/good visual detail vividly and obviously connects to a musical detail that has been described

Corresponding visual details (at least one)	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
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A strong/good visual detail vividly and obviously connects to a musical detail that has been described

<u>Piece #2: Stravinsky</u>					
Description of specific musical features (at least 5)	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10

A strong/good visual detail vividly and obviously connects to a musical detail that has been described

Corresponding visual details (at least one)	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
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A strong/good visual detail vividly and obviously connects to a musical detail that has been described

<u>Piece #3: Copland</u>					
Description of specific musical features (at least 5)	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10

A strong/good visual detail vividly and obviously connects to a musical detail that has been described

Corresponding visual details (at least one)	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/10
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A strong/good visual detail vividly and obviously connects to a musical detail that has been described

Part II: “So what” (30 points)

Critical Thinking	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/15
A strong/good piece of writing explores the author’s ideas in a way that is insightful rather than vague or superficial; a strong/good piece of writing goes beyond the superficial by thoughtfully incorporating comparison, contrast, and/or synthesis; a strong/good piece of writing addresses the implication of the ideas under consideration.					

Support	Strong	Good	O.K.	Weak	Points: ___/15
A strong/good piece of writing uses specific examples from Part I to support the author’s ideas that are interesting, relevant, specific, sufficient, and directly connected to the main idea; strong/good examples support the author’s ideas explicitly; any musical examples are accurately described.					

Total points _____/100

Letter grade: _____