

2021 VCE Music Style and Composition aural and written external assessment report

General comments

The 2021 VCE Music Style and Composition aural and written examination was consistent with the *VCE Music Study Design 2017–2022*. It was also consistent with the sample examination material published in April 2017 and had a similar structure to the 2017, 2018 and 2019 examinations. With one exception (Section B, Question 3) it was also consistent in structure with the 2020 examination. This change was as a result of the adjusted study design that was set for use in 2020 only. Students should note this difference carefully when reading the 2020 examination paper and the examination report from that year.

The 2021 examination consisted of two sections worth a total of 100 marks. The questions in Section A focused exclusively on Area of Study 1, Responses to Music. This section featured five questions based on short excerpts of music from a wide variety of geographical and historical backgrounds and was worth 70 marks. Section B featured three questions related to Area of Study 2 and was worth 30 marks.

Specific information

Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding resulting in a total more or less than 100 per cent.

Section A

Consistent with the study design, Section A featured excerpts of music from a range of styles and from a variety of cultures, including music for gaming, contemporary popular music by Australian artists, baroque, Australian music for symphonic wind ensemble and contemporary art music with electronic elements.

Many responses demonstrated students' ability to analyse the use of the elements of music and compositional devices found in these previously unheard excerpts of music. High-scoring responses demonstrated a clear understanding of the elements of music; this knowledge enabled students to access high marks on several questions. It was pleasing to see fine responses in relation to questions on variation and character in particular. Lower scoring responses were less detailed and showed confusion about the elements of music and compositional devices. These responses contained fewer observations about the use of the elements of music and compositional devices. Questions requiring an analysis of harmony and structure proved challenging for some students.

Question 1a.

Mark	0	1	Average
%	24	76	0.8

Any response that communicated an understanding of a minor tonality was awarded one mark.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	0	2	9	12	17	31	29	4.6

Layers of sound that students may have referred to included:

- marimba-like bass line on the root note of chords
- two female voices outlining melody, often harmonising in 3rds
- synthesised organ – chordal accompaniment role often on the offbeat
- drumkit, playing driving 4/4 rock/soul style rhythmic accompaniment.

Students may have referred to functional roles of the layers by using terms such as melody, chordal accompaniment, bassline or rhythmic accompaniment. Of equal validity was the use of terms such as foreground, midground and background. Generally, responses were pleasing with most students scoring four to six marks.

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	1	7	17	29	19	17	6	4	3.5

The finest responses to this question included one or more references to the chord progression or chords used. Students may have made other observations related to harmony such as instrumentation, rhythm, rate of harmonic change, structure, contour and repetition. All of these were valid and were awarded marks. Some more specific information about the treatment of harmony in the excerpt follows.

Verse: Am Am Dm E7

Chorus ending Am C Aug C D/A Dm E7

Bridge: C G/B Am C G/B Am C Dm E (7)

- The tonality of the excerpt (A minor) is established through the use of diatonic triads and 7th chords.
- The verse features a recurring chord progression that is outlined through the root notes in the bass as well as chords in the synthesiser. A consistent harmonic rhythm leads to a trance-like feeling of repetition and predictability.
- The chorus is more harmonically complex with an augmented chord creating a sudden point of interest and climax. The harmonic rhythm remains similar to verse. More use of 7ths here and a raised 7th, G#, appears in the melody. The second half of the chorus returns to the lower register melody and same chord progression as the verse.
- The first two lines of this bridge provide contrast as the natural 7th is emphasised. The final line of the bridge builds tension as both the melody and chords ascend towards a perfect cadence including the raised 7th creating an E Major, dominant chord.
- Overall, the approach to harmony is very much within the soul/pop style. It is mostly diatonic with a consistent approach to harmonic rhythm. It also uses strong tension-release created by perfect

cadences at the end of formal sections. Points of interest, such as the chorus and bridge, feature some contrast. Harmony is established through the use of synthesiser block chords, a root-note outlining bass line and melody that stays within the natural minor tonality and often harmonised in 3rds.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Average
%	2	1	4	7	10	7	10	19	13	8	14	4	0	6.7

In many responses there was a misidentification of the formal structure of the work, which is most elegantly described as rondo form. It is also possible to describe the form of the excerpt as ternary form with a coda. Within such responses, students may have achieved high marks by including references to the recurring ritornello within the A and A2 sections. Students may have included some of the following observations in their responses.

Overall form: Rondo

- A – Main theme (ritornello)
- B – Episode 1
- A2 – Return of ritornello
- C – Beginning of Episode 2

A – Main theme (ritornello)

First section of the ritornello

- Melodic features: Rising triadic motif answered by descending four-note quaver patterns based on minor harmonies. First part closes on dominant. Second part develops initial motifs through downwards sequence.
- Tone colour: Initial statement in unison/octave strings (*tutti*). A strong and clear tone colour is evident with harmony outlined by the melodic lines. Second part reinforced with winds (oboes and bassoon), adding a bright airiness to the texture, in addition to harmonic support via harmonisation of repeated melodic notes. Initial statement presented at a forcefully loud dynamic.
- Rhythm: Clear emphasis on the downbeats, enunciating 4/4 time. First motif starts with repeated staccato crotchets, on first two beats followed by staccato quavers.

Second section of the ritornello

- Melodic features: Begins with a held chord, leading into a short rising and falling motif in thirds over a dominant pedal that gradually accelerates in tempo.
- Tone colour: Sustained dominant note in lower strings dovetails into wind via the bassoon. Becomes a platform for two recorders in 3rds (added sweetness in tone). Absence of strings gives more feeling of space, while high register of winds contrasts with low bassoon, giving a clear texture. Dynamic drops to lower level.
- Rhythm: Section begins with a sustained pedal note in the bass, meter is suspended. The recorder motif utilises a semiquaver ornament on the beat leading into a sustained note, followed by an even descent. This is repeated three times, with *accelerando* through each iteration.

Conclusion of the ritornello

- Melodic features: Return to the figuration of the opening, beginning with staccato octave leaps and concluding with some descending slurs into a perfect cadence. The harmony is a continuation of the dominant pedal.
- Tone colour: Return to unison string texture, (louder dynamic) reinforced with recorder ornamentation.
- Rhythm: A return to the driving downbeat rhythms of the first section.

B – Episode 1

First section of the episode

- Melodic features: New theme – Two-part texture contrasting rising legato dotted rhythms and ornamental scalic sextuplets in the upper register with even staccato quavers in the lower register. Some use of descending sequence. The lower part enters canonically. More scalic approach to melodic figures. Harmony based on tonic.
- Tone colour: Sparse and cool tone colours contrast solo oboe against bassoon in the bass. Dynamic soft.
- Rhythm: Use of rhythmic variation in dotted quaver-semiquaver patterns and triplets. Contrasted with and supported by staccato crotchets in the bassoon.

Second section of the episode

- Melodic features: Fast-moving arpeggio semiquavers in violin. Harmony based on dominant (moving from I–V).
- Tone colour: Aggressive tone colour and louder dynamic in solo violin, strong but gentle support from lower strings.
- Rhythm: Semiquavers in the violin accent the downbeat. Forward motion maintained by scalic quaver movement in the lower strings.

Third section of the episode

- Shortened reiteration of material from a. ep. 1 part 1. Oboe part slightly more ornate.

Fourth section of the episode

- Shortened reiteration of material from b. ep. 1 part 2. Harmony moves from V–I.

Conclusion of the episode

- Melodic features: Begins with the rising and falling 3rds from ritornello part b, as an introduction to a florid, swirling oboe solo. This develops the descending sextuplet motive heard at the beginning of the episode and features descending melodic sequences leading to the establishment of a new key in the next section.
- Tone colour: Return to the recorders in 3rds supported by sustained lower strings. Tone colour is sweet. This is followed by a more complex texture contrasting the florid high register oboe (nasal tone colour) with a string accompaniment, which features sustained flowing harmonies that gradually become more agitated as the rhythmic activity intensifies and there is a dynamic crescendo.
- Rhythm: Varied fast rhythms in the oboe part (sextuplets, ornamentation), contrast with sustained harmonies changing in minims. These gradually give way to the harmonies being iterated in quavers and then semiquavers, leading to a rhythmic climax into the next section.

A2 – Main theme returns (ritornello)

- Melodic features: Return to the figuration of the opening, beginning with the repeated crotchets and continuing with descending slurs leading into a cadence.
- Tone colour: This time the tone colour is more complex as the oboes and bassoons are scored in unison/octaves with the strings.
- Rhythm: The same as A.

C – Episode 2 (coda)

- **Melodic features:** Reiterations of short rising and falling motif in 3rds over a dominant pedal derived from second part of the ritornello. The first iteration of each instrumental pair is taken directly from the original pattern, but the second is a rhythmic intensification featuring lower and upper neighbour tones in semiquavers. These phrases act as a springboard to the solo violin figuration that follows. This develops these patterns sequentially via a cycle of 4ths pattern. It also uses abrupt changes of register and concludes in a higher register.
- **Tone colour:** Recorders in 3rds alternate with oboes in 3rds, contrasting wind colours, sweet v. nasal. Lower strings support both, acting as a tone bridge unifying the texture. Solo violin offers more heat and energy to the tone palette.
- **Rhythm:** Both the wind parts and the solo violin develop into running semiquavers and are supported by a repeated staccato crotchet minim pattern in the strings. While the rapid solo parts generate rhythmic energy, the accompaniment anchors this and directs towards the cadence.

Question 3a.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	1	1	12	48	39	3.3

In general, students responded to this question well; most responses scored either three or four marks. In order to score full marks, students needed to identify four of the prominent sound sources. It was not sufficient to individually list members of the string family used. It was pleasing to see references to electronic sounds in some responses. Students may have listed:

- harp
- electronic sound sources creating chimes, shimmering effects, sustained electronic sounds
- vibraphone
- solo soprano
- bowed strings.

It should be noted that the term 'sound sources' appears in the study design and should be included in a course of study. The term is synonymous with instrumentation but has a broader connotation that includes anything that is capable of making sound. This includes any digital sound source or object fashioned for a different purpose. In responses, it appeared that some students were confused by the term.

Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Average
%	2	1	1	4	7	8	13	12	17	16	12	4	3	7.3

Most students successfully included a mood, emotion or other affective term or terms in response to this question. High-scoring responses incorporated justifications in the form of observations specifically related to the elements of music specified in the question.

The following student response mentions a transition between two characters as a result of change in texture and tone colour across the excerpt, using appropriate metalanguage. Overall this response has many positive characteristics.

A desolate, bleak character is established through the sparse, disjunct buzzing violin's homophonic texture, with the leading vocal playing in the foreground and the strings providing harmonic and chordal accompaniment. The large intervallic leaps and varying dynamics make the piece sound full. The vastness of the piece is mainly established through sparse instrumentation, therefore establishing a thin

texture. The violins provide density to the piece, and as the swells of the violins gradually increase in dynamics, the character becomes more menacing. The vibrato like techniques in violins add to the density of the piece, and as the vocal increases in register the texture becomes dense. An overall full and blended tone colour is established. The harp plays a clear, resonant timbre which is complimented by the buzzing, dark violins playing in a lower register. The female vocal is clear and bright due to mid range, however as the vocal pushes into a more uncomfortable register, the timbre becomes more piercing. The timbre becomes more full as the violins use vibrato and arco techniques, creating a more mellow timbre in comparison to the pizzicato string instrument.

Question 4a.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	3	6	27	35	29	2.9

Many students responded to this question well. Components of melody that students could have mentioned include the following.

- Contour – Bell-shaped contours are predominantly used.
- Register – Performed in the trumpet’s middle register.
- Range – Relatively narrow range – a 9th (highlighting the vocal nature of the melody)
- Instrumentation – The trumpet is played with straight mute.
- Structure and phrasing – Four 4 phrases are easily discernible:
 - The first phrase concludes on the scale degree 1 (in F dorian).
 - The second phrase concludes on scale degree 5 (in F dorian).
 - The third phrase concludes on scale degree 3 (in F dorian).
 - The fourth phrase concludes on the scale degree 1 (in F dorian).
- Tonality – F dorian mode
- Tone colour
- Articulation – Clear emphasis on the first beat of each bar via a marcato articulation.
- Rhythm – Three meters are utilised – 3/4, 4/4 and 5/8. A three-quaver anacrusis appears at the start of the melody.

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Average
%	2	0	1	2	6	8	12	15	19	16	9	8	3	7.5

This question was generally well handled. The responses that were awarded 11 or 12 marks were particularly impressive. It should be noted that students could approach the question in a number of ways. Some chose to supply details about four different sections of the excerpt and how variation was used in these. Other responses included details on how particular elements of music were varied across the excerpt. These formats supplied the clearest communication of ways in which variation was used.

Students may have included some of the following details in their responses.

Reorchestration

The clearest way that variation has been applied is reorchestration of the melody. Ten statements of the phrase structure are presented with different instrumentation playing versions of the pre-established melodic pattern; all are featured in the foreground. Instruments that play the melody included oboe, saxophone, euphonium, trombones and clarinet.

Melodic variation

In addition to the change in instrumentation across sections, there are other examples of rhythmic variation. Some examples of this occur in the following sections.

- 2. The fourth note is subject to minor rhythmic variation – this note is lengthened to a dotted crotchet and is followed by two semiquavers.
- 3. The melody is embellished with a semiquaver triplet.
- 4. Trumpets and trombones perform the melody in octaves.
- 5. Motivic development is applied to the first section of the melody. In some of the voices (e.g. low brass), the contour and rhythm are changed. Woodwinds and upper brass play motifs from the melody. High woodwinds then play a clearer, more recognisable iteration of the second section of the melody.
- 6. Trombones play the main melody in a relatively low register and in the new key of Eb dorian.
- 7. This section features substantial motivic and rhythmic alteration. New motifs based on intervallic and rhythmic patterns from the melody are heard. The instances of asymmetric meters increase and the associated pattern is repeated three times. At the end of the section, the piccolo and clarinet conclude by playing the last few bars of the main melody; however, this is embellished by semiquavers and triplet semiquavers.

Texture

Texture is also the basis for substantial variation. Some examples of changes in texture are featured in the following sections of the excerpt.

- 1. Monophonic
- 2. Initially in this iteration the accompaniment is homophonic; however, the underlying chordal accompaniment is then displaced by a quaver, adding rhythmic and textural interest.
- 3. A series of descending 4ths appear in the accompaniment in sequence. Towards the end of this section, the high woodwinds feature a continuous quaver / quaver rest pattern. The pattern is regular and operates independently of the meter, creating an interesting interplay between the accompaniment and the melody – at points the quaver falls at the same time as the main points of emphasis in the melody, at other points it operates in a 'offbeat' manner.
- 4. The 'offbeat/onbeat' quavers continue into this section and are further joined by drones and disjunct block chords.
- 5. Ascending scalar patterns are introduced in addition to the previous features of the accompaniment.
- 6. The ascending scalar runs are further expanded in this section. These are presented in a polyphonic manner, overlapping and varying in rhythm.
- 7. This section features extensive use of canon and fragmentation.
- 10. The section features a much thinner approach to accompaniment. A continuous flow of quavers is embellished by short flurries of ascending semiquavers usually ending in longer durations.

The following student response clearly explains four ways that variation is used. The use of music language is worthy of note.

First main melody played by trumpet, monophonic

Main melody is then repeated with slight variation in that clarinet now has the main melodic role. Rhythm is also varied, introducing semiquavers. Also instrumentation changes as longer monophonic now homophonic as other clarinets play longer held notes under the main melody.

Again the melody is varied and played by the saxophone but instead of long held notes in the harmony, high register interjections are added this again thickens the texture. The rhythm in the saxophone also becomes much more complex as well as the main melody itself as larger intervals are incorporated. The rhythm now incorporates simple syncopation and more semiquavers

This is again varied as the brass now has the main melody. Similar to the saxophone, there is simple syncopation that varies the rhythm, but in the harmony, instrumentation becomes much thicker, first introducing dissonant chords and chromaticism. There are still high register flute/piccolo interjections and

low drone like motifs in the clarinets but as the horn's phrase completes, they begin their own rendition of the melody, this changes the texture to polyphonic.

As the excerpt reaches its climax, Stanhope adds percussion instruments along with the thick polyphonic texture with the main one another in the aerophones.

Random interjections of snare tremolos and cymbal crashes add to the variation of the main melody as it states when each phrase begins and ends.

Question 5a.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	3	3	15	39	39	3.1

Most students correctly completed this question.

There were many patterns that students could have identified as examples of repetition. Some examples that could have been included are as follows.

- Opening melodic ostinato continues throughout the excerpt.
- New melodic idea introduced after a few seconds also repeats throughout the excerpt (with variations).
- Same time signature continues throughout the excerpt.
- Same tempo is maintained throughout the excerpt.
- Drones enter around one minute in and sustain the same pitch for long durations.
- Drum figure enters around 1'20" and maintains the same pattern for the rest of the excerpt.

Question 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	2	4	4	15	26	22	14	8	3	4.5

Students did not perform as well on this part of the question. The treatment of rhythm was quite sophisticated. The highest scoring responses were able to identify characteristics such as meter, polyrhythms, repetition and tempo. Some of the observations that students may have included were as follows.

- Excerpt is in additive time – most likely 5/4 (3 + 2).
- Excerpt maintains a moderate tempo, which remains steady.
- Main ostinato that opens the excerpt continues throughout.
- This is a two-bar ostinato with the rhythm 'ti-ti ti-ti ti-ti ti-ti ti-ti | ti-ti ti-ti ti-ti ti-ti ta'
- The second pattern that enters creates a countermelody with the main ostinato using longer note values, uneven phrases and silences between phrases. It uses a mixture of quavers, crotchets, minims and rests. It opens with a dotted minim, and also uses a dotted crotchet and quaver pattern.
- The second pattern also uses variation as the excerpt continues, which increases the rhythmic instability and sense of unpredictability.
- Moderate, steady tempo
- Around 55" a sustained note is introduced, which continues through a number of bars.
- Around 1'20" a drum pattern enters, providing a new rhythmic pattern consisting of quavers and crotchets.

The following student response uses music terminology very successfully. The response is accurate and highly detailed.

The tempo of the work is consistent throughout and is moderately fast. This is reinforced and maintained by the steady quaver ostinato in the bells which provides a rhythmic guide for other rhythms to fit into.

Longer sustained notes are heard in the low orchestral strings, which add another layer of rhythms to the work, this increases the rhythmic complexity. Later in the work, a drum kit is added, which provides a rhythm that fits into and emphasises the repeated quaver rhythm in the bells. This rhythm places emphasis on the off beats, adding to rhythmic drive of the work. At the end of the excerpt the quaver ostinato in the bells is subtracted, however a crotchet quaver rhythm, is maintained in the drum kit. There is much rhythmic repetition in this work, and the rhythms are straight not swing. The work is in 5/4 which creates a sense of 'off balance' and unpredictability, adding to the musical interest of the work, and there are brief segments of rhythmic unison in some parts. There is also rhythmic syncopation in the electric bass later in the work providing added musical interest and unpredictability.

Section B

Section B assessed students' understanding of the Outcome 2 works studied in Units 3 and 4.

In this section students were required to respond to questions that focused on:

- use of compositional devices – globally and at micro and macro levels
- contextual issues
- characteristic of style
- composers' use of the elements of music.

In Section B students responded to questions related to their chosen Australian, 'other' and post-1950 works. It should be noted that if a response was completed about a work that did not fit the parameters for a question, no marks could be awarded. In nearly all cases the works chosen were in accordance with the requirements of Section B.

Many high-scoring responses were completed. The highest scoring responses showed an in-depth knowledge of the works chosen for study. In these cases, students made many direct references to the works using appropriate music terminology. However, some students did not do well in this section of the examination. Questions on contextual issues posed particular challenges for students. In some cases, the contextual issues were poorly chosen and/or inadequately explained. It is important that students and teachers select contextual issues with care. Topics that could be explored include:

- the impact and influence of technology
- events with the personal life of the composer / music creator
- significant philosophical or social trends or movements
- significant historical events that inspire or influence the composer
- the influence of the commissioning on the work
- the influence of individual performers or ensembles for whom the composition was composed.

In order to show the relevance of the contextual issue, students are required to justify their contentions with relevant references from the work. It is important that these substantiations are not tenuous. The justifications and examples should focus on the elements of music and compositional devices.

A broad range of works were chosen for study. It was heartening to see the selection of sophisticated works from recognised styles and traditions as well as more recent compositions. Selection of works is critical to students' success in this section of the examination. It is important to note the study of multiple movements from a suite or symphony; multiple works from an album or multiple sections of longer works is not required. In relation to collections of works, the study design calls for the study of 'collection of minor works' and in one instance suggests the study of 'small collection minor works'.

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	4	4	3	7	5	10	13	15	16	16	5	6.2

In many instances this question was capably handled. Assessors awarded high marks to responses that had a clear, relevant contention followed by an explanation that incorporated correct use of terminology and direct references to the work. The following student response about Movement I of *Antarctica* by Australian composer Nigel Westlake displays many of these characteristics.

Westlake was commissioned to re-write the piece for the IMAX film Antarctica. The piece attempts to capture the desolate bleak atmosphere of antarctica through dissonant harmonies (especially prevalent in the Antarctica chord in bar 15; which uses combined 4th and 5ths) creating a dissonant cluster chord. Followed by this chord in bar 18 the chord fragments and becomes disjointed and irregular representing the cracks in frozen ice in the Antarctic landscape. The guitar in the piece replaces and the role of the narrator, emphasized in bar 40, where the guitar plays a solo cadenza in isolation to further represent the ways in which mankind have prevailed in this desolate landscape. The piece represents sonically how the giant icicles appear within the film, with the grand antarctica chord, with a dense texture, loud dynamics and strong syncopated pulses representing the grandeur of the landscape.

Question 2a.

Mark	0	1	Average
%	8	92	0.9

Assessors awarded one mark as long as a recognised style was clearly communicated.

Question 2b.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	8	4	22	29	36	2.8

In most cases students were able to describe characteristics as required. In lower scoring responses there was a lack of detail or it was contentious if the characteristics mentioned were pertinent to the style identified. It is recommended that teachers and students determine and study characteristics that are unambiguous and clearly connect to the style of the work.

Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	4	5	10	27	34	20	3.4

Beyond identification of characteristics, this question called for justification for the connection to the previously identified style. The highest scoring responses were detailed, contained many direct references to the work and used musical terminology successfully. The following student response about *Treat Her Right* by Roy Head and Gene Kurtz has many of these characteristics.

The harmonic influences or RnB are evident in THR through Head's use of G blues tonality, with the bass ostinato utilizing an ascending riff containing C, D, G, C, Db (b5), D notes to create the 'bluesy' feel of the work. This intervallic structure, like the global structure of the work, adheres strictly to the 12-bar blues.

The bass ostinato begins on G (I) the after 4 bars, moves up to begin on C (IV). This riff underpins that melody, which in the introduction is taken by the solo improvised electric guitar, playing notes such as F natural (b7) and Bb (b3) to strengthen the sense of tonality. The global structure of the work changes in accordance with the RnB structure, with each verse and chorus containing exactly 12 bars and the bass ostinato present throughout the entire work.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	2	2	6	6	10	12	14	14	14	15	6	6.2

The highest scoring responses were able to accurately present information about the role and aesthetic impact of repetition and variation in the chosen post-1950 work. Such responses incorporated justifications, music terminology and direct references to the work studied. The following student response about *Vessels* from *Koyaanisqatsi* by Philip Glass has many positive attributes.

Vessels is composed in minimalist style. Consequently, the interest that created in the work is fabricated entirely with minimal variation amongst massive amounts of repetition. The first bar introduces repetition at a micro scale with the soprano (from SATB) motif of quaver e, quaver f, quaver e, quaver f, quaver e, quaver f, creating a repeated ostinato that forms the primary thematic material of the work. This is varied in a micro way with Glass use of hemiola, with an absence of time signature, moving from implied 3/4 to implied 6/8 meter. This subtle change in the rhythmic divisions of the bar creates a 'surge' and 'settle' effect that becomes an ostinato in itself. Global variation of this hemiola through its structural reversal (from 6/8 to 3/4) creates a jerky effect that startles the listener in Glass' typical minimalist fashion. The uneven global repetition of each 'cue' creates an irregular, unpredictable character that is exacerbated by the hemiola reversal and the variation in instrumentation that delineates each section. By shifting from SATB to winds (flute, soprano sax, tenor sax) in the second section of *Vessels*, Glass creates surprise, but nonetheless continues the repetition of the hemiola with an immediate micro level diminution of the previous quaver rhythm (SATB) to semiquaver rhythms (winds) fabricating a false sense of increased tempo. At section 3, Glass further diminishes the wind rhythm into tripleted semiquavers, increasing the intensity and creating a climax. Through his use of repetition and variation, Glass has created a work places the listener under minimal pressure, not requiring them to focus on modulation or development, but rather minimally varied elements that causes the, to focus maximum attention on small details. Throughout the whole work, the initial soprano motif is constant, every present, yet in many ways constantly shifting.