

June 13, 2011

Sihyun,

Read the attached article about keeping a “notebook” of your ideas, so that you have them to refer back to. When I see your fluid and overflowing musical ideas on paper, I thought of the notebook article for you. Bach often re-worked his compositions and presented them in new instruments, new “concerti,” new clothing.

I’d suggest you return to basics and use some of these: “repetition, imitation, sequence” using the Review Lesson 1. Then begin to assemble 4 bar phrases that are your “working ideas,” such as suggested in the “Motive or motif” article by B. Becker.

Once you’ve begun to collect motives or grouped them into 4 bar phrases (or 2 bars are okay, too), then try putting them into a **FORM**, such as the Minuet I’ve attached.

A Minuet is a form that essentially has this plan:

A Theme (see **Yellow line** of m.1-4, then 5-8 tosses it between violin 2 and viola, then m.9-12 cello has the theme)

B Theme (see **Green line** of m. 13-20)

A Theme (see **Yellow line** m.21-24 tossing it between violin 2 and viola, then m.25-28 cello finishes the theme)...though not exactly the same

Fine (the end)

C Theme (see **Blue line** m. 29-36)

D Theme (see **Pink line** m. 37-40)

C Theme (see **Blue line** m. 41-48)

D.C. al Fine (return to beginning and play to Fine)

Mozart was a master at this, putting a few ideas together and working out a Minuet form. Try it yourself, all you need is 4 themes. Just write it all for violin first, organizing your ideas, marking which theme is which and bring it to me. Then you can transform it into a string quartet we could play at CMI by moving your ideas into other instruments like I did between violin 2, viola and cello.

When I wrote this Minuet, I wanted to try something that used lots of harmonics in different places on the string instruments and see how it would print on a new computer program I was learning to use. It inspired me to throw all kinds of harmonics in, just to see how it would sound.

I hope this gets you inspired.....

WHAT IS A MOTIVE OR MOTIF?

Barbara Becker

Do you know that many composers have a book of motifs? I have such a book and use it much like the diary or journal that a writer keeps. George Gershwin had one and called it his "tune book." On occasion, I find my book quite useful when needing an idea for a composition, or for that matter, even teaching.

Since a motif consists of only two or three notes, why don't you start one? After a while you will discover that you have many motifs that could be used when you have your next improvisation workshop.

Three examples of a two-note motif:

EXAMPLE 1. Here the interval of the 4th becomes the impetus for an atonal composition.



EXAMPLE 2. Now the 4th is tonal, in E Major, and could be a lullaby or nocturne.



EXAMPLE 3. Here the 4th becomes an idea for a waltz.



Barbara Becker's musical talent became evident at age four when she spontaneously began playing by ear, improvising, and arranging nursery rhyme tunes on the piano. She is a graduate of Roosevelt University with a Bachelor of Music Education degree. Her first three undergraduate years were at Oberlin College. She has since studied with noted musicians and is a student of Julian White. Published by Neil A. Kjos, commissioned by and composer-in-residence for her chapter of MTAC, and winner of several Composers Today awards, Barbara is only now coming into her own as a composer and looking forward to devoting more time to composing, including use of the Internet to publicize music that is distinctly her own.



Review Lesson 1

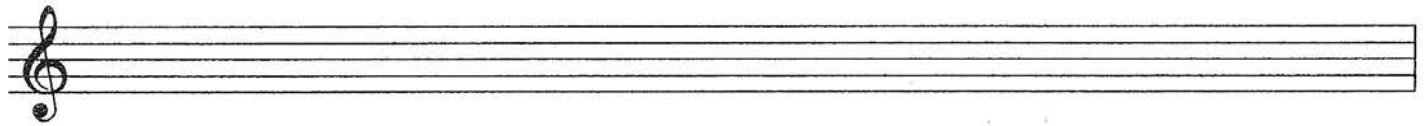
Now that you have at least one composition completed, let's review what you've learned.

2 bar Motive

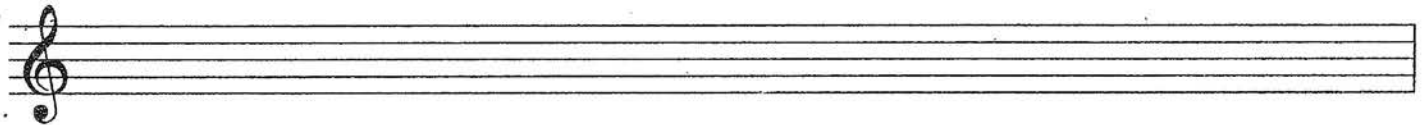
2 bar Motive - what makes it similar to the previous motive?



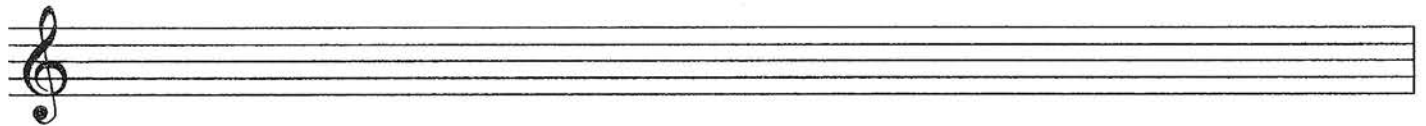
Divide the staff into 4 equal measures. Number the measures above the staff.
Make your own 2 bar Motive in measures 1 + 2, then repeat your motive in measures 3 + 4. (REPETITION)



Divide the staff into 4 equal measures. Number the measures above the staff.
Make your own 2 bar Motive in measures 1 + 2, then imitate your motive in measures 3 + 4. (IMITATION)



Divide the staff into 4 equal measures. Number the measures above the staff.
Make your own 2 bar Motive in measures 1 + 2, then a sequence of your motive in measures 3 + 4. (SEQUENCE)



Composers use rhythmic repetition and sequences to give the music a coherent "flow," yet it's always interesting and new:



Minuet

Kay Pech
May 2003

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

© 2003 Pech Publications

13 (A)

Vln. I *f* Arco Pizz. Arco

Vln. II *mf* Arco

Vla. *mf* Arco

Vc. *mf*

20 (B)

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc.

25 *Fine*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

f *mp* *f* *f*

Pizz. *Arco*

29

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp *mf* *mp* *mp*

Arco

37

(D) (E)

Vln. I *mp* *mf*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp* *f*

Vc. *f* *mp*

43

DC

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.