

Music 2  
Instructor: Larry Polansky  
Fall, 2007

Assigned: Wednesday, October 31  
First draft due to instructor: Wednesday, November 14  
Final version to performers: Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup>.  
Performances in class: Week of November 26th

## Composition Assignment

Compose a short piece for performance in class.

The piece must be fully notated, and must be written to be performed by someone other than yourself. Available instruments are (for the moment): viola, clarinet, piano, guitar (or mandolin, etc.). However, we can arrange for other instruments if given enough advance notice (talk to me).

You may compose in any musical style. For example, it might be a 16 measure song, a short piano piece, something for guitar and clarinet, clapping hands and piano; spoons and three voices, or whatever you like.

These pieces may be in any key: major, or minor, or some mode. You may mix several tonalities and modalities; or you may invent a mode or scale of your own. You may, in fact, eschew the notion of scale (and pitch) entirely (for example, you could, if you like, write a percussion piece).

The **performers must have their final scores (parts) by Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup>**, so that they can work on them a bit over the Thanksgiving recess.

### *Notation*

It must be notated in conventional music notation, and written by hand (not using a computer). The notation must be clear, readable, neat, and friendly towards your musicians. I will go thru each first draft (which should be as complete as you can make them) carefully and make notational suggestions. We will also try to meet individually about the pieces near the end of the first draft stage.

### *Grade*

Your grade for this assignment will be based on your creativity, feeling, sincerity and invention, as well as how much work you put in. Your notation must be thorough, accurate, neat, readable, and correct. In other words, I am looking for, imagination combined with hard and careful work. Please use me as a resource for notational as well as artistic questions: we can work on these pieces together.

**Do not hand in your original or only copy.** Make several photocopies of your piece, one for me, one for yourself, and one extra for the performer (or performers). We will make transparencies of all the pieces, and watch the score as the piece is played.

*Basic Requirements for the Piece*

Although I'm willing to accept any style of music, you must be able to articulate to me, if asked, what it is you are trying to do in terms of style, ideas, harmony, melody, form, and so on. If you're unsure of a direction to go in, use what you know from what we've studied so far, or come see me.

The following criteria must be satisfied in the composition of this piece:

- it must have a name, and the name must be on the score
- you are the composer, and your name must be on the score
- there must be NO "cross-outs" in the final copy you give to the musicians and me. I will be very picky (in grading) about how it looks! Do a rough sketch, then a first draft (which I get to see and work on), *and then* make a final copy when you've convinced yourself everything is how you want it to be. Consider this to be a finished piece — in this particular case, I do not want to see your progress manifested on the page.

I would very much suggest playing through your work on the piano, or meeting informally with the in-class musicians to read thru small bits of it to get a sense of what it sounds like. You must (!!!) be able to hear your own work in some way, as you write it, and doing it at the keyboard can be a big help. If it doesn't make sense to your ear, it won't to ours!