

שמע: Fuging Tune in G

Written in 1979, this piece is a set of variations on the most common tune for the central prayer of Judaism. The word שמע is often translated as “listen,” in the imperative. Sometimes I’ve construed it to mean “pay attention.” I’ve often had the perhaps fanciful idea that this prayer, traditionally said while covering your eyes, is more or less a musician’s main job. The piece is dedicated to my father, Arnold Joseph Polansky. It was originally published in *Soundings 11*, edited by Peter Garland, but a new edition has been made for this performance by myself and Dennis Kitz, for whose hard and excellent work I am grateful.