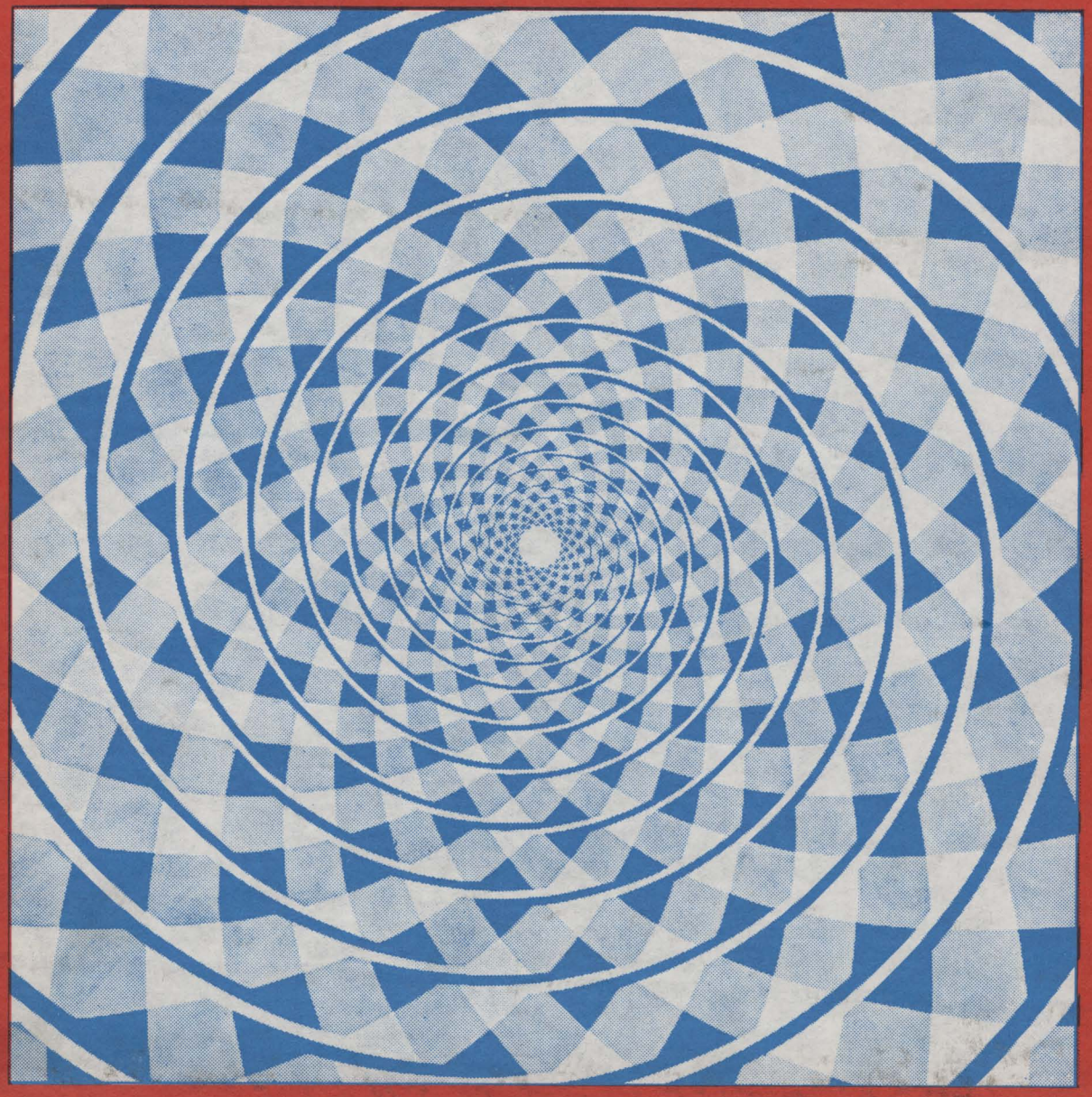
INVITATION TO MUSIC

Prepared and Narrated by Elie Siegmeister

Illustrated by musical examples from:
Beethoven, Chopin, Schubert, Mozart,
Tschaikovsky, Stravinsky, Bach, Bizet,
Brahms, Bartok, Moussorgsky, Wagner,
Debussy, Shostakovitch, Prokofiev,
Berlioz, Folk Music and Jazz.

Folkways Records FT 3603

Based on the book, "Invitation to Music" by Elie Siegmeister, published by Harvey House



FOLKWAYS RECORDS FT 3603

Introduction: Melody, Scales
Rhythm: Beat
Harmony: Chords
Counterpoint: Invention, Fugue, Cool Jazz
Tone Color: Timbre
Form: Three-Part Form, Two-Part Form

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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Elie Siegmeister

SIDE I

Band 1: INTRODUCTION
Melody, Scales

Band 2: RHYTHM: BEAT

Band 3: HARMONY: CHORDS

SIDE II

Band 1: CHORDS (Continued)

Band 2: COUNTERPOINT
Invention, Fugue, Cool Jazz

Band 3: TONE COLOR: TIMBRE

Band 4: FORM
Three-Part Form, Two-Part Form

ELIE SIEGMEISTER

NEW York-born Elie Siegmeister is a composer whose spirit seems to find a more congenial home in areas both to the south and west of the wide open spaces of that famous metropolis. The Ozarks, roundups, bullwhackers and Brooklyn have all been subject matter for his musical inspiration. But one must not be led into thinking that he is a composer of regional music, for he has composed in many forms reflecting universal themes and interests. His works have been performed by Arturo Toscanini, Leopold Stokowski, Dimitri Mitropoulos, and other leading conductors. In addition to the New York Philharmonic Symphony, the Philadelphia, Cleveland, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, St. Louis, Detroit, Kansas City, Rochester and other major American orchestras have played his works. His music has also won wide attention abroad.

Born in New York City in 1909, Siegmeister studied at Columbia University, where he earned his B.A. degree and a Phi Beta Kappa key at the age of eighteen. Four years of work with Nadia Boulanger in Paris followed, after which he studied conducting on a three-year fellowship at the Juilliard Graduate School. In the 1940's he served as choral director for a number of Broadway musicals, appeared as guest conductor with various orchestras and taught at the University of Minnesota. At the same time he helped establish one of America's most important associations of serious composers, the American Composers Alliance. In 1949 he joined the faculty of Hofstra College, where he is now Associate Professor of Music and Director of the Hofstra Symphony Orchestra.

A prolific composer, Elie Siegmeister has written in all forms. Besides seventeen orchestral works, including three symphonies and ten major works for the theatre, he has composed over one hundred songs, dozens of works for chorus, piano, chamber music ensembles, symphonic band and music for films. His music is frequently used as background for television plays. In 1939 he won wide attention for his group, the American Ballad Singers, which he directed in six concerts at New York's Town Hall and in numerous nation-wide tours. In 1943 Alfred A. Knopf published his first folksong collection (in collaboration with Olin Downes)—the widely hailed *Treasury of American Song*—and shortly thereafter the Book-of-the-Month Club selected the composer's *Music Lover's Handbook* for distribution of over a quarter of a million copies.

Siegmeister's first work for the Broadway theatre was his score for the Theatre Guild musical, *Sing Out Sweet Land.* Starring Alfred Drake and Burl Ives and conducted by the composer, it was hailed as one of Broadway's most distinctive musicals. There followed *Doodle Dandy,* which toured for three seasons following its Broadway debut, and two short operas, widely performed throughout the country. One of these, *Darling Corie,* was recently seen throughout Canada on CBC-TV. Hanya Holm, Doris Humphrey, Helen Tamiris, Jack Cole and other choreographers have created ballets to his music.

Of Siegmeister's *Western Suite,* premiered by Arturo Toscanini with the NBC Symphony, Virgil Thomson wrote, "Its material is of the highest beauty, and its treatment is full of sound sense as well as skill." Leopold Stokowski, commenting on the composer's *First Symphony,* said, "Siegmeister is unusually gifted as a composer, with rare insight into the possibilities of American folk music as a basis for the personal musical expression of the American composer. Moussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakoff, Prokofiev and others have done this for Russian music. Siegmeister is one of our outstanding composers who will do it for American culture."

I'm Elie Siegmeister, composer. I have spent much of my life writing, playing, studying and struggling with music. Music is a tremendously wide and varied world. It contains many, many different kinds of expression, each having its own particular kind of beauty, meaning and form. There is a way to listen to music, because music has many depths and meanings that do not always appear on the surface.

MUSIC: From Beethoven's 9th Symphony

That was a section of Beethoven's 9th Symphony. You cannot listen to music like this without perhaps wondering, "What goes to make it up?", "How did the composer put it together?" and "What was he trying to say?"

A composition exists as a whole and is also interesting to us because of its parts; its rhythm, melody, harmony and tone color.

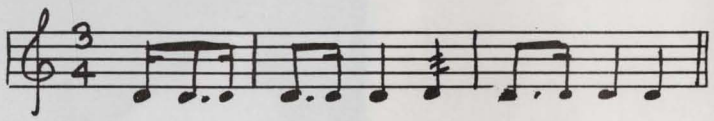
Here, for example, is the beginning of Chopin's Mazurka in A Minor:

MUSIC: Piano

Like every other composition, this Mazurka is a combination of several different materials. Let's stop for a moment to sort them out.

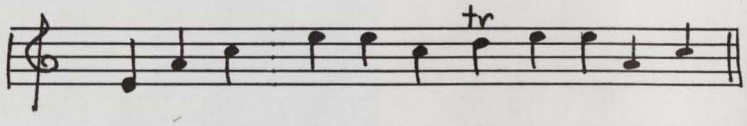
Here is the rhythm of the piece without the melody:

MUSIC: Drum rhythm



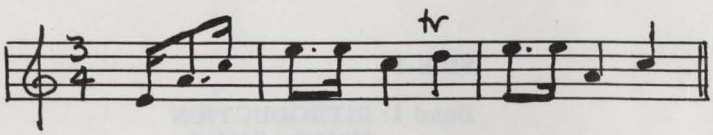
Here is the melody without any rhythm:

MUSIC: Piano melody, all in even notes



Those are two materials of the music, rhythm without melody, and melody without rhythm. The chances are you do not find this very promising so far. But let's put them together -- rhythm and melody -- and we begin to get somewhere:

MUSIC: Piano, right hand



Of course there is still something missing: the harmony -- in this case, the left hand of the piano.

MUSIC: Piano, left hand

Again the harmony is not too exciting by itself -- yet

it does furnish an important underpinning and support to the melody, as you can hear when I play the right and left hands together.

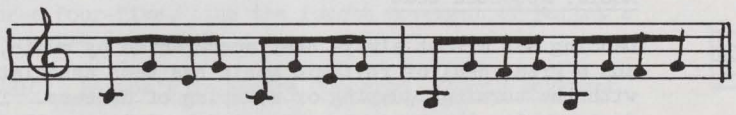
MUSIC: Piano, both hands

MELODY

Let's take a close look at each of the materials of music in turn, starting with melody. Everyone knows, of course, what a melody is, yet it is very difficult to define the word. If we try, we might come up with something like this: "Melody is a succession of single tones, arranged in an interesting or attractive pattern."

The only trouble with this definition is that not too many people will agree on what is "interesting" or "attractive". For example, here is a pattern of tones you sometimes hear little children practising:

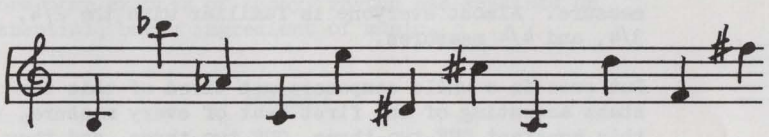
MUSIC:



I think we'd all agree that this group of tones is neither interesting nor attractive.

What about this:

MUSIC:



I'm afraid that might sound to some people like a cat walking across the keys. But a certain group of musicians today, called "atonalists", might consider it a very respectable melody according to their standards.

But here is something, from Schubert's Unfinished Symphony, that I think we can all agree is a melody:

MUSIC: From Schubert's Unfinished Symphony

Now while there are many books that can teach you how to write harmony, throughout the long history of music no one has ever found a rule for writing melodies. What a good melody is, and how a composer manages to write one, still remains mysteries.

One thing we do know, however, is that melody has power to communicate emotion. A simple pattern of tones without the help of any harmony can suggest gaiety, sadness, nobility, or tenderness.

For example, the melody of the Minuet from Mozart's opera, Don Giovanni, is elegant and gracious:

MUSIC: MINUET, Don Giovanni

This melody from Tschaikovsky's Fourth Symphony, is full of Russian melancholy:

MUSIC: From Tschaikovsky, Symphony No. 4

The opening phrase of Stravinsky's Rites of Spring has a strange, unearthly quality:

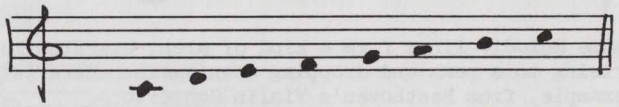
MUSIC: From Stravinsky, Rites of Spring

One element that influences the mood and the structure of a melody is the scale in which it is written.

It is widely recognized that different scales can have different emotional qualities. The ancient Greeks had one scale they thought was fierce and warlike, and another they considered soft and sensuous -- not to be played for children!

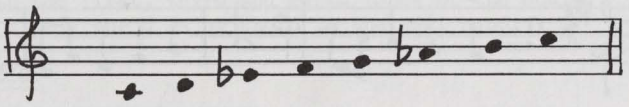
In our time, many people feel that the Major scale

MUSIC: Major scale



is a happy scale, and that the Minor scale

MUSIC: Harmonic minor scale



is darker and more serious.

While musicians do not agree on this point, let's test the theory by playing the same tune in the two different scales. Here is the French folk song, Au Clair de la Lune, as it is written, in the major scale:

MUSIC: Au Clair de la Lune

Now listen to what happens if I play the same song in the Minor scale:

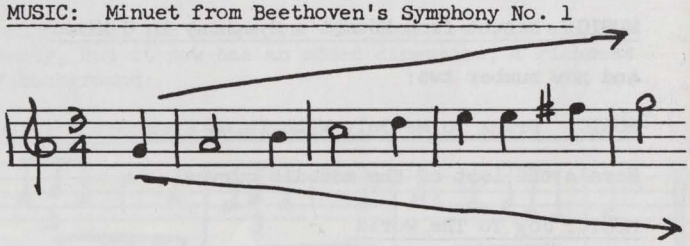
MUSIC: Au Clair de la Lune, in Minor

While you are making up your mind about the effect of major and minor scales, just one more word about scales. An old Chinese legend tells us of a musician who played the scale of winter in the middle of the summer: an icy wind blew down and the rivers froze over. Those people thought scales had tremendous powers!

Granted that the structure of a scale influences the character of a melody, how does melody move within a scale? A good melody is like a fine drawing or painting. It has a definite shape or design. (Musicians often speak of a "melodic line.")

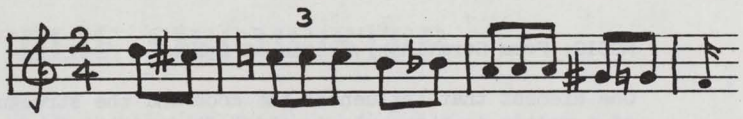
Some melodies move straight up the scale, one step at a time, like this Minuet from Beethoven's First Symphony:

MUSIC: Minuet from Beethoven's Symphony No. 1



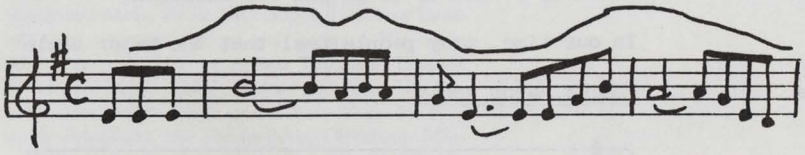
The Habanera from Carmen keeps on moving down, down, always down:

MUSIC: Habanera from Carmen



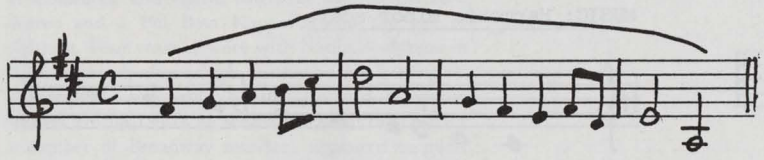
Other melodies have a gentle wave-like motion, up-and-down, up-and-down, like the tune of Poor Wayfaring Stranger:

MUSIC: Poor Wayfaring Stranger



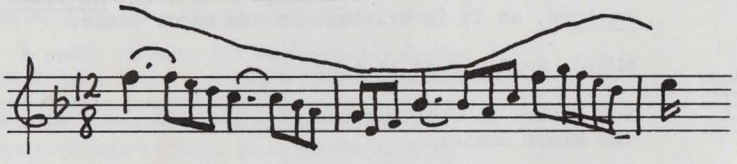
Some melodic lines form a kind of arch, starting low, rising to a peak and dropping down again. Here is an example, from Beethoven's Violin Concerto:

MUSIC: From Beethoven's Violin Concerto



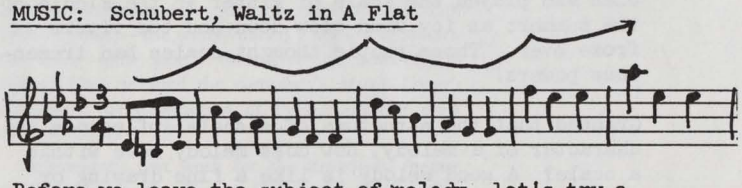
Another type of melodic curve starts high, drops low and then rises again, like Bach's Concerto for Two Violins:

MUSIC: Bach, Double Concerto



Perhaps the most interesting pattern of all is one that starts low, rises in a gradual series of curves, reaching a climax near the end. The rising wave of the melodic line carries our emotions along with it, as in Schubert's Waltz in A Flat:

MUSIC: Schubert, Waltz in A Flat



Before we leave the subject of melody, let's try a little experiment. I am going to play snatches of three well known compositions. See if you can trace the melodic curve of each one on paper. You will find the correct answers in the album booklet.

Here's the first melodic curve:

MUSIC: Minuet from Mozart's Symphony in G Minor

And now number two:

MUSIC: Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes

Here's the last of the melodic curves:

MUSIC: Joy To The World

1) Rising wave
2) Arch
3) Bowl (falling, then rising line)

RHYTHM

There are many, many more things one could say about melody, but let's turn now to another basic material of music -- rhythm.

Just what is rhythm? It is the pulsing or flowing of music in time. Music has taken its basic rhythms from those of the human body. The continuous beating of the heart is perhaps the most fundamental of all rhythms. There is a certain kind of very primitive music that consists of nothing but a repeated beating of the drum, like a heart beat.

MUSIC: Drum beat

But since a continuous series of equal and steady beats can become monotonous, men found out at an early date that it is more interesting to sound one beat more loudly than others -- or to accent it:

MUSIC: Accented beat

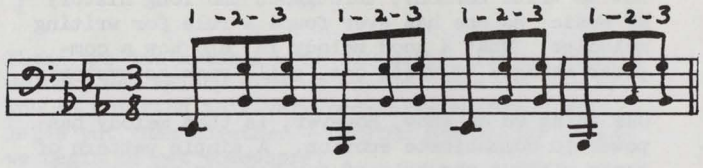
Dancing has almost always been accompanied by music, and a great deal of rhythmic music has been associated with the turning, jumping or stamping of dancers. In dance music, the heavy, or accented beat is usually the down-beat, when the foot comes down.

In the course of time, accented and unaccented beats came to be grouped in regularly repeated patterns, called "measures". The most common measures have either two, three or four beats, with the accent generally on the down-beat, or the first beat of each measure. Almost everyone is familiar with the 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 measures.

But once in a while composers get tired of this constant accenting of the first beat of every measure, this constant ONE-two-three, ONE-two-three, and they decide to try an off-beat or syncopated accent, like one-TWO-three-four, or one-two-THREE-four.

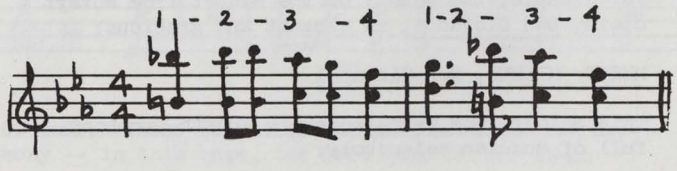
A more adventurous use of rhythms has been developed by modern composers, like Stravinsky, Bartok and Prokofiev, who sometimes like to write in two different rhythms at the same time. We call this polyrhythm. Here is an example of polyrhythm from one of my own piano pieces. In this phrase, the left hand plays a fast ONE-two-three, ONE-two-three.

MUSIC: Siegmeister, Three Preludes (left hand)



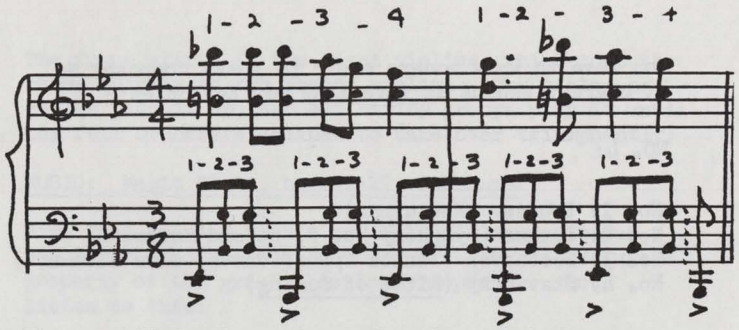
Over this the right hand plays a slower ONE-two-three-four.

MUSIC: Right hand



When I play right and left hands together, there is a rhythmic clashing or polyrhythm.

MUSIC: Both hands together



When you listen to a piece of music, take notice of its rhythmic quality. Are its rhythms wild, driving ones such as we hear in Stravinsky's Rites of Spring?

MUSIC: Stravinsky's Rites of Spring

Or are they solemn, measured rhythms, as in Brahms' Variations on a Theme of Haydn:

MUSIC: Brahms' Variations on a Theme of Haydn

Does the music have an uneven beat, ONE-TWO, one-two-three-four-five, like the fourth movement of Bartok's Orchestra Concerto?

MUSIC: Bartok's Orchestra Concerto, fourth movement

Or does the rhythm have a gentle, flowing beat, as in Bach's Second Brandenburg Concerto?

MUSIC: Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 2, second movement

From the simpler note patterns of early music to the more complex ones of today, rhythm has remained an essential, basic ingredient of music.

HARMONY

In primitive and ancient times, probably for thousands of years, music consisted only of melody and rhythm. As far as we now know, when people made music in groups, everyone sang or played the same sounds, with at most some kind of drumbeat or other rhythmic accompaniment. No one had yet discovered the pleasure of sounding different tones at the same time.

Then, about a thousand years ago, it happened. We don't know exactly when or where, but about 850 A.D. western man made the first step towards creating the new musical language we call harmony.

A very primitive type of harmony is known to many peoples. It is a drone, or a long, deep tone sustained under a melody, as in Scottish bagpipe music. Here is a drone performed on a double reed pipe by an Indian street musician:

MUSIC: Sanai Ganath

A slightly more advanced type of harmony developed when two or more singers performed a song, with one group singing the melody on a higher pitch than the other. Notice the rich quality of this African melody performed by a solo voice answered by a chorus singing in thirds:

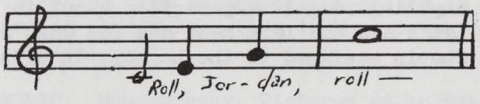
MUSIC: African Song

While such simple methods of blending sounds have been developed by many peoples, harmony in the fullest sense of the word did not come into being until the musicians of medieval Europe invented chords, sometime after the year 1200.

I said a little while ago that melody was a group of tones sounded one after the other. Chords are a group of tones sounded at the same time.

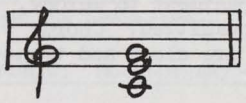
If we take the first three tones of the old spiritual, Roll Jordan Roll,

MUSIC: Roll Jordan Roll



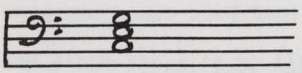
and play them together, we get the most familiar chord in all music, the C Major chord:

MUSIC:



Now it so happens that many different melodies start with the first, third and fifth tones of the scale. If I play the C Major chord in the left hand:

MUSIC:



I can play quite a few different melodies in the right hand, all of them fitting perfectly over this chord in the left hand. Here, for example, is the beginning of the Blue Danube Waltz:

MUSIC: Blue Danube Waltz

The old hymn, Holy, Holy, Holy:

MUSIC: Holy, Holy, Holy

The beginning of Beethoven's Leonore Overture, No. 3:

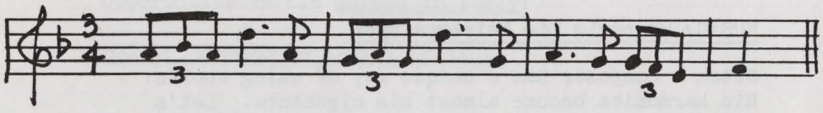
MUSIC: Beethoven's Leonore Overture

Dixie Land

MUSIC: Dixie

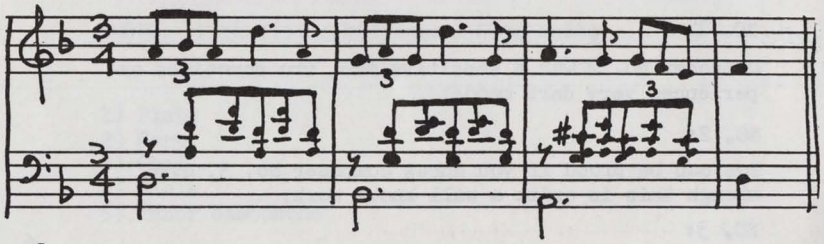
Chords have become a basic part of western music. They add richness and depth to the beauty provided by a melody. For example, here's the melody alone of Schubert's Serenade:

MUSIC: Schubert's Serenade, melody only



When you add the harmonies the music retains all its beauty, but it now has an added dimension, a richness of background:

MUSIC: Serenade, with harmony



In certain compositions, the melody plays a very small role, the harmony being all important. In the E Minor Prelude of Chopin, for example, all we hear in the melody is:

MUSIC: Chopin's Prelude In E Minor, right hand only

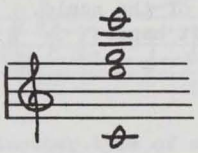
There's hardly anything to get very excited about in that! But now let's add the left hand and see what an important role Chopin assigned to the harmony in this Prelude:

MUSIC: Chopin's Prelude In E Minor, both hands

SIDE II

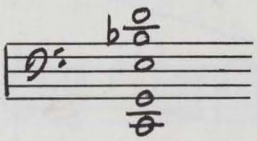
In addition to acting as an accompaniment to melody, harmony has other very important qualities. Chords give color to music. Some chords are clear and transparent, like this one:

MUSIC: Chord



Other chords are dark and rich, like this:

MUSIC: Chord



Some chords are full and triumphant, like these from the last section of Moussorgsky's Pictures At An Exhibition:

MUSIC: Moussorgsky's Great Gate of Kiev

Richard Wagner was a master at using harmony to create dramatic effects. The opening chords of Tristan and Isolde suggest immediately the passionate and tormented mood of that beautiful opera:

MUSIC: Wagner's Tristan

Wagner used solid, substantial chords to create a robust feeling in Die Meistersinger Von Nurnburg:

MUSIC: Wagner's Die Meistersinger

Often a composer has a unique way of using chords. His harmonies become almost his signature. Let's see how many of the following four composers you can recognize, just from the way they use harmonies:

Here's composer No. 1, a very individual and distinctive musician:

NO. 1:

Composer No. 2 was a sensitive man, who sometimes experienced very dark moods:

NO. 2:

You can be proud if you guess composer No. 3, even though this is quite a well known work:

NO. 3:

You have to know modern music to guess composer No. 4, a great genius at inventing new harmonies:

NO. 4:

No. 1) Debussy (Nocturnes)
No. 2) Brahms (Symphony No. 2, second movement)
No. 3) Beethoven (Sonata Appassionata, slow movement)
No. 4) Stavinsky (Rites of Spring)

Many music students study harmony for two or three years, so don't be surprised if you cannot learn all about the subject in a few minutes. When you listen to music, however, you can gain much pleasure by paying special attention to the quality of the harmonies used by the composer.

COUNTERPOINT

We now come to another aspect of music that sometimes seems mystifying but really is a most intriguing and fascinating subject: Counterpoint. In harmony, one voice, the melody dominates; the other voices play a subordinate part. But counterpoint is the joining together of separate voices and instruments, each carrying an independent melody, and all equally important.

If a number of people sing a round like Row, Row, Row, Your Boat, or Frere Jacques, they are singing counterpoint. I can't sing this round for you in three voices, of course, but I can play them all on the piano. Notice how each voice enters at a different time, how each goes its own way, independently, yet all fit together to form a pleasant sound.

MUSIC: Frere Jacques, on piano

Frere Jacques, of course, is a very simple type of counterpoint. Here is one that is slightly more complex, the Two Part Invention in F Major by Bach. Listen to the opening few measures of the right hand alone:

MUSIC: Bach, Invention No. 8, right hand

Here now is the left hand, which echoes the right hand, an octave lower.

MUSIC: Left hand

We call this echoing, Imitation:

Listen now to both hands played together. First the right hand enters, then the left. The melody of each hand is sufficient to itself, yet both interweave and fit together beautifully, making true counterpoint.

MUSIC: Invention, both hands

Bach and other masters of counterpoint, such as Handel, Mozart, Palestrina, Brahms and Hindemith, would often weave together four, five or more melodies into a beautiful tapestry of sound that gives pleasure to the listener.

One of the most famous contrapuntal forms is the Fugue. Like the Invention, the Fugue is based largely on one theme, which is treated in intricate combinations. Here is a fugue from Mozart's Magic Flute Overture. The theme of the fugue sounds like this:

MUSIC: Mozart: Magic Flute, theme

The fugue starts in the first violins, which toss the theme quickly to the second violins. The violas and cellos pick it up, and all string groups play it until the full orchestra decides to take over triumphantly:

MUSIC: Magic Flute, bars 1-27 of Allegro

Now, from hearing Bach's and Mozart's compositions, you might conclude that counterpoint is the exclusive property of the great classical composers. But listen to this:

MUSIC: Van Kriedt, But Happy

That, of course, was a piece of counterpoint played by cool jazz men. Cool jazz very often relies upon interesting interweaving of sounds. It goes to prove that counterpoint is an essential part of music, very much alive today as it has been for hundreds of years.

TONE COLOR

When a composer has worked out a musical idea, and has found rhythm, melody, harmony, and perhaps some counterpoint, he is still not finished with his work. At this point he often must decide which instrument or instruments will play his music -- in other words, which tone colors he will select.

Tone color, or "timbre" as we sometimes call it, is one of the important materials of the composer. He can give his music bright sounds, like those of the flute:

MUSIC: Flute

or trumpet:

MUSIC: Trumpet

He can set his music in dark tones, like those of the bassoon:

MUSIC: Bassoon

or the double bass:

MUSIC: Bass

A sensitive composer uses timbre in much the same way as an artist uses color. Like the painter who combines colors in a harmonious way, a composer may select timbres that blend and give a smooth, unified sound, as Shostakovitch did in the third movement of his 5th Symphony, which features the blended sounds of string instruments:

MUSIC: Shostakovitch's 5th Symphony, third movement

A modern artist, such as Van Gogh or Picasso, sometimes prefers colors that clash in an exciting way. He might place orange next to pink, perhaps with a dash of yellow or purple in between. Similarly, a modern composer sometimes puts together timbres that contrast in a fresh and interesting way. Prokofiev, in his Lieutenant Kije Suite, writes a lovely passage in the strings. Then, while the strings are still sounding, over their tones there comes the pointed, brassy sound of cornets, horns and tuba. The clash between the strings and brass instruments creates a fascinating modern tone color.

MUSIC: Prokofiev: Lieutenant Kije

The art of selecting and combining instrumental colors is known as "orchestration". A good orchestrator must be sensitive to the quality of the music he is working with, and emphasize this quality by the sounds he chooses. Usually composers orchestrate their own music, but sometimes it happens that a composer orchestrates someone else's work. A fine example of imaginative orchestration is Ravel's treatment of Moussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition. One movement is called "The Ballet of the Chicks in Their Eggs", and it sounds like this in Moussorgsky's original piano version:

MUSIC: Moussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition, The Ballet of The Chicks in Their Eggs

To emphasize in his orchestration the humorous, playful quality of this music, Ravel used the high staccato notes of the woodwind instruments, and the pizzicato, or plucking sounds, of the strings. It sounds like this in the orchestra:

MUSIC: Moussorgsky-Ravel: Orchestral Pictures

When you have grown to love a certain orchestral composition and have heard it several times, listen to it once more, concentrating only on the instrumental sounds and the manner in which they are combined. After some practise you will begin to recognize the qualities of the various instruments, and the different ways composers used tone color

And since there is no time like the present to get started, let's give you a chance right now. See if you can name the instrument you hear in each of the following short excerpts.

The answers will be found in the album booklet:

No. 1, The opening of Debussy's Afternoon of a Faun:

MUSIC: Debussy's Afternoon of a Faun

No. 2 is from Tschaikovsky's Waltz of Flowers:

MUSIC: Tschaikovsky's Waltz of Flowers

No. 3, a very lovely melody from Brahms' Violin Concerto:

MUSIC: Brahms' Violin Concerto

No. 4 This instrument does not often have a chance to play solo but Berlioz gave it a wonderful opportunity in his Harold in Italy:

MUSIC: Harold In Italy, Berlioz

Now for the fifth and last chance to show how much you know about orchestration. What is the low instrument carrying the melody in this passage from Prokofiev's Lieutenant Kije Suite?

MUSIC: Prokofiev's Lieutenant Kije Suite

1) Flute
2) Harp
3) Oboe
4) Viola
5) Tenor Saxophone

MUSICAL FORM

Let's suppose you are a composer, and you have just written some lovely melodies, clothed them in interesting harmonies and perhaps counterpoints, and you have what you think are wonderful ideas for orchestral colors. Can you relax?

No, not yet, for with all these excellent materials, you may still not have a composition. You must join them all together so that all the elements fit together to make a unified whole. In other words, your problem is one of Musical Form. Form is a way of combining many different musical ideas into a single, organized composition.

Without form, a work of music may be too long or too short, may have too many climaxes or not enough, it may become monotonous or repetitious, and end by boring the listener.

It is easy to recognize form in objects we can see. If you look in the album booklet, you will see a picture of a Gothic Cathedral. As the eye travels from left to right, you will notice a tower, a round window, and another tower. The vertical line, the round shape and the repeated line make a balanced structure which gives pleasure to the eye.

Although it is more difficult to recognize form with the ear than with the eye, the same balanced structure we find in the cathedral is present in many musical works; only here it exists in time rather than in space.

For example, let's take the tune of Au Clair de la Lune. The first part has a gentle, wave-like motion:

MUSIC: Au Clair de la Lune

The middle part has a falling motion:

MUSIC: Au Clair de la Lune

And now the last part is like the first one over again:

MUSIC: Au Clair de la Lune

When I play the song all the way through without stopping, you notice that it has three parts: the first and the last being alike, the middle one different. This is called Three Part Form. It is one of the basic forms in music because it satisfies our need for repetition and for variety.

MUSIC: Au Clair de la Lune

Another basic form in music is the Two Part Form. This one is derived from dancing, where you take a certain number of steps forward and then the same number of steps back.

Here is a Two Part form everyone knows.

Part One:

MUSIC: Pop Goes The Weasel, first half

Part Two has a contrasted melody, balancing the first one.

MUSIC: Pop Goes The Weasel, second half

Classical composers, especially Bach, Scarlatti and Handel, often used Two Part form in compositions inspired by the dance. Listen to the two parts of the Minuet from Don Giovanni.

Part One:

MUSIC: Mozart: Don Giovanni, Minuet

Here's Part Two:

MUSIC: Don Giovanni, second half

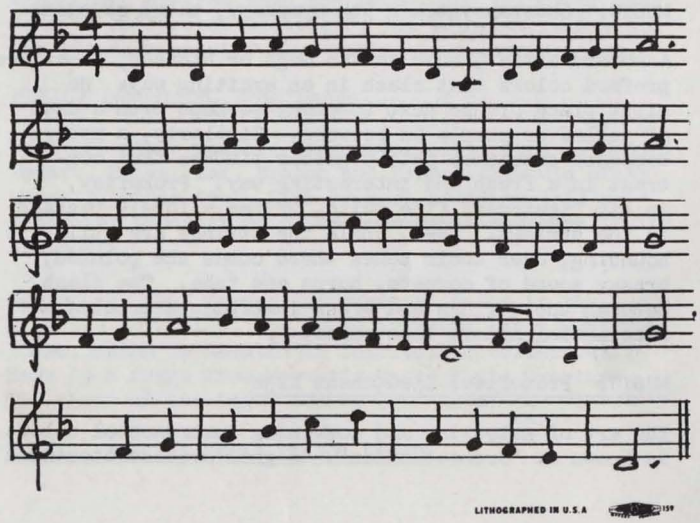
Now that you are getting acquainted with some of the basic principles of form in music, let's see if you can recognize the following. Here are three compositions. Which of them is in two part form, and which is in three part?

MUSIC: 1) Haydn's Gypsy Rondo
2) Beethoven's Ode To Joy, 9th Symphony
3) Old Joe Clark

1) Three Part Form
2) Three Part Form
3) Two Part Form

Since many popular and traditional songs are in the standard two and three part forms, some people think that every piece of music must follow these regular patterns, and have an even number of measures. Many wonderful folksongs and themes by classical composers, however, have irregular, free forms that give them distinction and originality. Here is a song in five phrases having an odd number of measures - nineteen. It is one of the most beautiful Christmas carols I know. The music is printed in the album booklet, so you can examine more closely its assymetry:

MUSIC: God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen



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