

SYNOPSIS OF TWENTIETH CENTURY STYLES AND COMPOSERS

Introduction

This synopsis is meant as a reference and as a guide to further research on the modern composers and music.

It is interesting to note that as students (and teachers) we are constantly striving to group and classify in order to simplify and make more manageable our own understanding of the knowledge at hand. On the other hand composers, especially the composers of this century, are most often desperately trying to be seen as individuals and not to be pigeon holed into some group.

It is important to remember that each of the names on these pages represents a life of work in our profession. It is impossible to accurately sum up a lifetime of work in descriptions as short as the ones in this handout. At some level they will always be in error.

Also, keep in mind that composers of the last century are often borrowing this or that element from here or there. Some write in multiple stylistic languages, and some switch styles throughout their career.

Do not discount human error, it is impossible for me or any other scholar to know all there is to know about this many composers.

In other words, once you scratch past the surface classifying composers in this manner is inaccurate and arbitrary. It is trying to contain a fluid environment in containers that the fluid can flow through and around.

Styles Entering the Twentieth Century

Italian/German-Austrian Post Romantics

(Post Romantic - Composers who continue to write in the Romantic period style into the Twentieth Century). Some of this group most notably Strauss and Schoenberg begin to deal with "Expressionism" (dealing with the dark side of human emotion and subconscious thought) and with highly chromatic writing moving toward atonality.

Bruch, Max 1838-1920; Puccini, Giacomo 1858-1924; Mahler, Gustav 1860-1911
Strauss, Richard 1864-1949; Busoni, Ferruccio 1866-1924; Pfitzner, Hans 1869-1949;
Reger, Max 1873-1916; Schoenberg, Arnold 1874-1951 (becomes the inventor of the Serialism style in 1921 and no longer can be considered a Romantic). Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario 1895-1968
(Italian who moved to the United States before W.W. II - also composed film music);

Russian Post Romantics

These composers often borrow from nationalistic ideas, folk music, or some more progressive Stravinsky based techniques. Also, there is a significant cultural interchange going on between France and Russia at the beginning of the Twentieth century. The two countries have a mutual treaty to defend themselves from Germany and Austria. This led to significant cultural bonds and stylistic exchange. Once the communist revolution occurred romantic style nationalistic composition was encouraged by the Soviet regime.

Glazunov, Alexander 1865-1936; Scriabin, Alexander 1872-1915 (After 1908 his work becomes almost totally atonal and based on numerous synthetic scale and unusual chord ideas); Rachmaninoff, Sergie 1873-1943; Roslavetz, Nikolai 1880-1944 (Very experimental - followed the atonal work of Scriabin); Miaskovsky, Nikolai 1881-1950; Khachaturian, Aram 1903-1978; Kabelevsky, Dmitri 1904-1987;

Impressionism

One of the first innovative steps entering the new century, Impressionism is a French National variation on the Romantic style that brings many new techniques to composition including: extreme use of extended chords; pentatonic and modal writing; and the whole tone scale. Once you get past Debussy and Ravel many of these composers use a bit of Romantic technique at times. As far as classification with many early Twentieth century French composers you can have this silly debate whether they are Impressionists that use Romantic technique or Romantics that use some Impressionistic technique. What follows is purely my opinion on who belongs in Impressionism vs. French Post Romantics

Debussy, Claude 1862-1918; Delius, Frederick 1862-1934 (actually English); Dukas, Paul 1865-1935; Ravel, Maurice 1875-1937 (Late in his career Ravel adds some neoclassic techniques into his language); Griffes, Charles 1884-1920 (American); Boulanger, Nadia 1887-1979 (Practically gave up composing when her sister Lili died. She thought Lili much more talented than herself. She is famous as a teacher of composition and associate of Stravinsky. Her students included dozens of important American composers from Aaron Copland to Philip Glass); Boulanger, Lili 1893-1918;

French Post Romantics

As stated previously some of these composers add a bit of Impressionism to their style.

Faure, Gabriel 1845-1924; Chaminade, Cecile 1857-1944; Roussel, Albert 1869-1937;

Other Nationalistic Post Romantic

Most of these composers use Romantic Technique with Nationalistic themes. Some bring elements of folk music and more modern techniques into their style at times.

Janacek, Leos 1854-1928 (Czech); Elgar, Edward 1857-1934 (England); Nielsen, Carl 1865-1931 (Denmark); Sibelius, Jean 1865-1957 (Finland); Beach, Amy 1867-1944 (USA); Falla, Manuel de 1876-1946 (Spain); Cadman, Charles Wakefield 1881-1946 (USA, wrote numerous songs on Native American themes); Szymanowski, Karol 1882-1937 (Poland);

Eric Satie

Although he borrowed some from the Impressionistic language Satie considered himself an anti-Impressionist and anti-Romantic. He concentrates on simplicity and is a precursor of the later neoclassic language of Stravinsky. He became the figurehead of a group of "neoclassic" influenced composers known as Les Six (although not a member).

Satie, Eric 1866-1925

American Early Experimental

This is an early group of very experimental and in some cases nationalistic American composers. Most of these composers considered themselves in a group led or at least influenced by Charles Ives. They did early work with many techniques that will become associated with the neoclassic composers including polytonality (different keys in different parts at the same time), polychords (two chords at once), and tone clusters (chords made of clusters of dissonant notes). They also experimented with some techniques we consider as last half of the century techniques such as the use of electronics and playing the piano strings (in the case of Cowell).

Ives, Charles 1874-1954; Ruggles, Carl 1876-1971; Varese, Edgard 1883-1965 (wrote a small number of very important works (including Density 21.5 for unaccompanied flute - the first woodwind/brass unaccompanied work and Ionization - the first piece for percussion ensemble); Riegger, Wallingford 1885-1961; Ornstein, Leo 1892-2002 (piano virtuoso very heavily influenced by Futurism and Antheil); Cowell, Henry 1897-1965 (wrote very conservative Irish influenced modal fugues in his symphonic style. However, his piano music is very experimental - using electronic amplification and the technique of playing the piano strings: most well known are the Three Irish Legends, the Aeolian Harp, and the Banshee); Antheil, George 1900-1959 (Futurist: used machines in his instrumentation - such as airplane propellers, buzz saws, doorbells);

Styles emerging 1900-1909:

English Nationalistic Modal

These composers avoided Romantic harmonic techniques instead they use a harmonic and melodic language taken from folk music. Around 1920 some Stravinsky and Hindemith techniques begin to be incorporated by these composers. These techniques become prevalent in the language of these composers in the 1940s
Vaughan Williams, Ralph 1872-1958; Holst, Gustav 1874-1934; Bridge, Frank 1879-1941 (very interested in Schoenberg and Stravinsky); Grainger, Percy 1882-1961 (Australian, most conservative of this group in terms of adding elements to his modal language); Arnold, Malcolm b. 1921 (some of his music could be classified as totally neoclassic but most is immersed in English folk music).

Styles Emerging 1910-1919

Igor Stravinsky

Stravinsky and Schoenberg are probably the two most important musical forces of the first half of the century. To some up Stravinsky quickly - he most often is using simple melody with dissonant harmony and building tension through complex rhythm. He uses (and many people give him credit for inventing - rightly or wrongly) many of the techniques often loosely referred to as "neoclassic." These techniques include: pandiatonic (dissonant harmony, diatonic-modal melody all notes in the melody and harmony drawn from the same scale-mode); polytonality (multiple keys at once); polychords (multiple chords at once); mixed meter; polyrhythm (multiple meters at once in different parts); and occasionally pantriadic technique (non functional triadic progression); Neoclassic refers to the use of these techniques with traditional forms (sonata, symphony etc.). There is also a definition of "Neoclassic" referring to a style period within the work of Stravinsky. In this style Stravinsky is modeling his composition on the works of classic composers. I am often using the term much more loosely to define a group of composers using Stravinsky style harmonic language and traditional forms. Although a Russian composer, Stravinsky spent most of the pre World War II years living in France and Switzerland and then like many European composers moved to the United States to avoid World War II. In his lifetime he was often called the "Chameleon" for changing styles so often. We now see most of these changes as superficial. His harmonic and melodic language remained constant as the other elements of the music he was writing changed. Here is how his work is typically divided into styles:

Romantic Period influenced student work ending with *the Firebird* in 1910;
"Primitive" early ballets 1911-13 (often called "Primitivism" due to the prehistoric program of the *Rite of Spring* and the pounding rhythms of these works); Small Theater pieces 1914-1920; Neoclassic (using Baroque and Classic period forms and style outlines: 1920-1952; Late Religious Works (Mass etc.) :1940-1971; Begins using Serialism 1952 - although he adopts the technique to his own sound and needs);
Stravinsky, Igor 1882-1971

Eastern European Nationalistic

These composers mix Eastern European folk music with the more experimental technique developed from the influence of Stravinsky and in some instances Hindemith.

Bartok, Bela 1881-1945; Kodaly, Zoltan 1882-1967 (mostly folk settings - much more conservative than Bartok); Martinu, Bohuslav 1890-1959; Kurtag, Gyorgy b. 1926 (much younger and very experimental composer following in this style and also adding a great deal of ideas from Webern);

Soviet Russian

Most Soviet composers did the bidding of the dictatorship and composed in a very nationalistic romantic period style. A few (mostly thanks to their international reputations) were able to move beyond those restraints at times. These composers combined the more conservative nationalistic romantic style with the techniques of Stravinsky and native Russian and Hebrew & Yiddish folk music to create a unique style. Often the style of these composers vacillates based on the pressure they are receiving from the government.

Prokofiev, Sergei 1891-1953 (Struck by the ideals of the Soviet revolution Prokofiev moved back to Soviet Union after the revolution. At this point he was already an emerging international figure).
Tcherepnin, Alexander 1899-1977; Shostakovich, Dmitri 1906-1975 (the only of the composers brought up in the Soviet system who enjoyed international name recognition in the general populous. "got away" with a great deal of dissonance by weaving Yiddish and Hebrew folk music and themes of Russian suffering during the wars into his music);

Styles Emerging 1920-1929:

Serialism - The Second Viennese School and Early Serialism

Dodecaphonic Serialism is the ordering of the twelve notes into sets called rows in order to create chromatic atonal music. The technique was codified by Arnold Schoenberg in 1921 after his expressionistic style had evolved to a point where it was essentially atonal. The initial Serialistic composers were known as the "Second Viennese School" and included Schoenberg and his two primary students Berg and Webern. Berg used serialism to pursue the dark programmatic overtones of expressionism. Webern created short miniatures of absolute music. Webern had the greatest influence on most of the later serialistic composers.

Schoenberg, Arnold 1874-1951; Webern, Anton 1883-1945; Berg, Alban 1885-1935; Wellesz, Egon 1885-1974; Schreker, Franz 1878-1934

"Les Six" and the French Neo classic (tonal &/or atonal)

This group of composers was heavily influenced by Satie and Stravinsky. They were dubbed "Les Six" in an article and the name stuck. Later composers in this style often search for unique and personal ways to implement tonality in addition to the traditional neo classic techniques.

Durey, Louis 1888-1979; Honegger, Arthur 1892-1955; Milhaud, Darius 1892-1974; Tailleferre, Germaine 1892-1983; Auric, Georges 1899-1983; Poulenc, Francis 1899-1963; Dutilleux, Henri b. 1916 (later generation of tonal composer - not a member Les Six);

Hindemith Central European Neo Classic (tonal &/or atonal)

Although most German and Austrian composers were post romantics or serialists a few took up the flag of the neoclassic techniques of Stravinsky. As a sweeping generality instead of Stravinsky's often used simple melody with dissonant harmony one often finds the Hindemith style using very chromatic melody with consonant (but nonfunctional) harmony. Also, Hindemith adds Quartal Harmony, (building chords out of stacks Perfect Fourths - a technique first seen heavily in Debussy) into the main tools of the neo classic. Later composers in this style often search for unique and personal ways to implement tonality in addition to the traditional neo classic techniques.

Respighi, Ottorino 1879-1936; Toch, Ernst 1887-1964; Hindemith, Paul 1895-1963; Orff, Carl 1895-1982; Krenek, Ernst 1900-1991 (his later music is serial); Weill, Kurt 1900-1950; Pijper, Willem 1894-1947 (Dutch, very atonal); Hartmann, Karl Amadeus 1905-1963 (one of the few composers to really meld Hindemith style neo classic writing with the German post Romantic style of Mahler and Reger and even some Berg). Pettersson, Allan 1911-1980 (Swedish); Nordheim, Arne b. 1921 (Norwegian: mixes atonal chromatic writing with passages heavily influenced by Delius and Scriabin); Mortensen, Finn b. 1922 (Norwegian composer who wrote in the style of Hindemith and has gradually turned to serialistic methods); Killmayer, Wilhelm b. 1927 (very unique tonal language combining consonance and diatonic writing with a sense of rhythmic space frequently associated with modern serialists). Loevendie, Theo b. 1930 (Dutch, a great deal of Jazz influence and some Eastern influence at times);

Latin and South American Nationalism (and other composers)

These composers seek to wed Latin and South American music with European twentieth century styles ranging from the conservative to the avant garde

Villa Lobos, Heitor 1887-1959; Chavez, Carlos 1899-1978; Revueltas, Silvestre 1899-1940; Ginastara, Alberto 1916-1983 (late in his career starts adding many avant garde techniques of the Berio/Stockhausen school and sometimes the Eastern European Texture/Sound mass composers); Santaro, Claudio b. 1919 (moves to serialism in his later music); Vega, Aurelio de la b. 1925 (Cuban); Gandini, Gerardo b. 1932 (modern, often uses style juxtaposition and collage); Quintanar, Hector b. 1936 (influential Mexican electronic composer); Terzian, Alicia b. 1939 (uses modern serialism and at times electronic techniques); Nobre, Marlos b. 1939; Antunes, Jorge b. 1942 (Brazilian, electronic); Ortiz, William b. 1949 (Puerto Rican composer who concentrates on bringing Caribbean and urban music into the Western art music idiom);

English Neo Romantic

These are more conservative English composers that took a bit of the Vaughan Williams technique and sometimes a bit of things more experimental but held onto a mostly Romantic language influenced by Elgar.

Bliss, Arthur 1891-1975; Jacob, Gordon 1895-1984; Walton, William 1902-1983;

American Neo Romantic

This is a new generation of Romantic style composers that emerges in America and continues to the present. Often the mix a bit of more modern stylistic traits into the Romantic language. Some historians use the word neo romantic to refer to any modern composer who uses a programmatic idea as a basis for composition. I am using it more specifically to refer to using romantic period based harmony.

Hanson, Howard 1896-1981 (originally from Wahoo, Nebraska, Hanson is best known as the director of Eastman School of Music for most of the century); Barber, Samuel 1910-1981 (his early works are his best known, adds neoclassic techniques heavily into his later writing); Menotti, Gian Carlo b. 1911 (best known as a composer of direct and melodic opera); Bernstein, Leonard 1918-1990; Wernick, Richard b. 1934 (occasional serial passages); Suderberg, Robert b. 1936; Del Tredici, David b. 1937 (the most prominent of the currently composing Neo Romantics often adds more dissonant techniques); Albert, Stephen 1941-1992; Paulus, Stephen b. 1949;

European Neo Romantic

This is a new (Twentieth century) generation of Romantic style composers that emerges in Europe and continues to the present.

Korngold, Eric (1897-1957); Meij, Johann de b, 1953;

Styles Emerging 1930-1939

English Neo Classic (tonal &/or atonal)

These composers are often as Nationalistic as any English composers, but their harmonic vocabulary comes more from Stravinsky than Vaughan Williams. Later composers in this style often search for unique and personal ways to implement tonality in addition to the traditional neo classic techniques.

Tippett, Michael b. 1905; Britten, Benjamin 1913-1976;

Copland and North American Tonal and Neo classic (tonal &/or atonal)

Many of these composers were heavily influenced by American folk music, nationalism, and the neoclassic techniques of Stravinsky and Hindemith. A few members of this group incorporate bits of romantic period language. They combined these resources into a very popular language. Copland himself (except in a few serial pieces) rarely used the harsh pounding dissonance of Stravinsky although their harmonic techniques are similar. The same cannot be said of all these composers (some of whom have some very dissonant moments). Later composers in this style often search for unique and personal ways to implement tonality in addition to the traditional neo classic techniques.

Moore, Douglas 1893-1969; Rogers, Bernard 1893-1968; Piston, Walter 1894-1976; Sessions, Roger 1896-1985; Thomson, Virgil 1896-1989; Harris, Roy 1898-1979; Thompson, Randall 1899-1984; Copland, Aaron 1900-1990; Luening, Otto 1900-1996 (in the 50's becomes a very experimental tape music composer); Creston, Paul 1906-1985; Wilder, Alec 1907-1980; Schuman, William 1910-1992; Dahl, Ingolf 1912-1970; Weisgall, Hugo b. 1912 (atonal opera composer); Dello Joio, Norman b. 1913; Gould, Morton b. 1913; Fine, Irving 1914-1962; Diamond, David b. 1915; Persichetti, Vincent 1915-1987; Papineau-Couture, Jean b. 1916 (French Canadian, neoclassic); Morawetz, Oskar b. 1917 Canadian of Czech birth, very dramatic tragic programmatic writing); Foss, Lukas b. 1922 (neoclassic who later turns to "free atonality" and group improvisations); Mennin, Peter 1923-1983; Rorem, Ned b. 1923 (some romantic language often slips into his music); Somers, Harry b. 1925 (Canadian - style resembles Copland); Argento, Dominick b. 1927 (very tonal); Hartley, Walter b. 1927; Adler, Samuel b. 1928; Wyner, Yehudi b. 1928; Muczynski, Robert b. 1929; Ward-Steinman, David b. 1936; Zwilich, Ellen Taaffe b. 1938 (sometimes introduces Romantic style elements); Rosner, Arnold b. 1945; Larsen, Libby b. 1950;

Styles Emerging 1940-1949

Messiaen

Messiaen is one of the most important composers and teachers of the century. His students include highly influential European composers such as Berio, Stockhausen, and Boulez. Interestingly, none of his students sound like Messiaen himself. Messiaen as a composer is a transitional figure from the techniques and ideas of the first half of the century to those of the second. He is one of the first composers who is often referred to as "Eclectic" (borrowing from many sources). His harmony is reminiscent of the extended chords of Debussy. His melodic techniques are very unique. He uses symmetrical synthetic scales of his own devising (a development from the whole tone scale of Debussy). He transcribes bird songs to create unique melodic curves. Rhythmically he has a very extended sense of space one finds in the music of many the later serialists. He writes non retrogradable (palindrome) rhythms. He uses a developmental technique of additive and subtractive rhythm. In this technique he develops a line by slowly evolving the rhythmic duration. This technique later becomes prevalent with the minimalists. He also brings back an old medieval rhythmic technique called "Isorhythm" where he simultaneously uses rhythmic and melodic ostinatos of different lengths.

Messiaen, Olivier 1908-1992

Serialism: In the second half of the century

In the second half of the century serial composers expanded the technique with a number of new implementations of the tone row. One of the most notable was an invention of Olivier Messiaen called "Integral Serialism" where every aspect of a piece (including things such as rhythm, dynamics, articulation etc.) is serialized. Most of these composers were most heavily influenced by the music of Anton Webern.

Eimert, Herbert 1892-1972 (often combines synthesizers and serialism); Krenek, Ernst 1900-1991 (his early style is neo classic); Wolpe, Stefan 1902-1972; Dallapiccola, Luigi 1904-1975; Baaren, Kees van 1906-1970; Lutyens, Elisabeth 1906-1983 (English); Perle, George b. 1915 (very concerned about consonance vs. dissonance and key centers in his rows.); Weinszwieg, John b. 1913 (Canadian); Babbitt, Milton b. 1916 (probably the leading name in combining synthesizers and serialism); Rochberg, George b. 1918 (in the 1960's moves away from serialism to a Collage style); Kirchner, Leon b. 1919; Maderna, Bruno 1920-1973 (often combines synthesizers and serialism); Shapey, Ralph b. 1921 (somewhat freely uses the technique at times); Mortensen, Finn b. 1922 (Norwegian composer who wrote in the style of Hindemith and has gradually turned to serialistic methods); Nono, Luigi 1924-1990 (often combines synthesizers and serialism); Boulez, Pierre b. 1925 (also very famous as a conductor); Kupferman, Meyer b. 1926 (often combines synthesizers and serialism); Escott, Pozzi b. 1931; Goehr, Alexander b. 1933; Davies, Peter Maxwell b. 1934 (one of the few modern serialists more influenced by Berg than Webern, very interested in expressionism, theatrical ideas, style juxtapositions, and creative ways of using the technique); Vlijmen, Jan van b. 1935; Heininen, Paavo b. 1938; Wuorinen, Charles b. 1938 (sometimes mixes Stravinsky style neoclassic tonality in); Knussen, Oliver b. 1952 (sometimes uses style collage, Scottish);

Carter - American "Freely Atonal" polyphonists.

These composers are very hard to classify. They use mostly traditional ensembles (with the exception of Nancarrow). Carter rejects both serialism and neo classic writing. The style is highly chromatic and atonal, highly polyphonic, and incredibly complex rhythmically. Carter, for example, is highly fond of nesting tuplets (a triplet on the second note of a larger quintuplet etc.). In many ways these composers view themselves as the inheritors of the American experimental tradition of Ives, Varese, and Cowell.

Carter, Elliott b. 1908; Nancarrow, Conlon 1912-1997 (most well known for his numerous works for player piano. These thick complex pieces are beyond the range of human performance). Brant, Henry b. 1913 (Canadian most well known for expounding on Ives' ideas on antiphonal sections and groups scattered throughout the performance venue); Mamlok, Ursula b. 1928; Saxton, Robert b. 1953 (English); Ran, Shulamit (writes in a very expressive style that adds subtle elements of mid eastern music to expressionistic freely atonal technique); Thomas, Augusta Reed b. 1964

Non Western Influenced

Ethnomusicology (the study of ethnic music) began in the first part of the century with a comprehensive study of the folk musics of Western cultures. Once this seemed completed many composers began looking outside Western civilization to the East - India, China, Korea, Bali, Japan etc. for influence. Often these composers would spend years traveling and studying. Also, some composers from non Western backgrounds began to try to find a language that merged their traditional music with Western music in some way.

Bloch, Ernst 1880-1959 (a precursor to this style Bloch was a Swiss born composer who lived in America and wrote music based on Hebrew folk music. His students included many American composers including Sessions and Antheil); Sorabji, Kaikhosru Shapurji 1892-1988 (Indian); Ben-Haim, Paul 1897-1974 (Israel - more Romantic style is in his language than is typical of the others in this category); McPhee, Colin 1901-1964 (often credited as the first Western researcher of the Gamelan music of Bali and Java); Scelsi, Giacinto 1905-1998 (started as a serialist is becoming very well known for his experimental non Western influenced late works where he would improvise and have these improvisations transcribed by an assistant); Hovhanness, Alan 1911-2000 (one of the most popular modern composers in terms of record sales. Hovhanness' destroyed all the scores of his first neo romantic style. His first mature period music combined the modes (which he came to from an Armenian background) with Baroque and Renaissance counterpoint. His middle period music 1950-1970 reflects his intense study of the music of Korea, Japan, and India and is much more experimental than his early writing. His late music synthesizes both styles containing movements that resemble his early modal work and more experimental movements.); Cage, John 1912-1992 (early piano and percussion music - his later music fixes him as the leader of the American experimental composers.); Harrison, Lou b. 1917 (largely responsible for bringing the Gamelan -music of Bali and Java- to the U.S. He has written numerous works for Gamelan and Western Instruments). Yun, Isang 1917-1995 (Korean-German); Chou Wen-Chung b. 1923 (ancient Chinese musical practices); Leeuw, Ton de b. 1926 (Dutch composer interested in Japanese music); Mimaroglu, Ilhan b. 1926 (Turkish often electronic music); Mayuzumi, Toshiro b. 1929 (Japanese, Eastern styles & electronics etc.); Yuasa, Joji b. 1929 (Japanese, known for blatant superimposition of Japanese and Western Music); Amram, David b. 1930; Hirose, Ryohei b. 1930; Takemitsu, Toru 1930-1996 (the most internationally recognized of the Japanese composers); Ichianigi, Toshi b. 1933; Miyoshi, Akira b. 1933; Durko, Zsolt b. 1934 (Hungarian, - atonal and chromatic with folk influenced); Riley, Terry b. 1935 (one of the originators of minimalism, very into non Western concepts and music) Dempster, Stuart b. 1936 (trombonist composer who specializes in using non western techniques on Western instruments); Ishii, Maki b. 1936; Noda, Teruyuki b. 1940; Ung, Chinay b. 1942 (Cambodian-American); Vivier, Claude 1948-1983 (very experimental Canadian); Louie, Alexina b. 1949 (Chinese-Canadian); Ran, Shulamit (writes in a very expressive style that adds subtle elements of mid eastern music to expressionistic freely atonal technique); Garland, Peter b. 1952; Hykes, David b. 1953 (non Western vocal specialist); Nishimura, Akira b. 1953; Fujieda, Mamoru b. 1955; Hosokawa, Toshio b. 1955 Tan Dun b. 1957 (Chinese composer recently became well known for his work on the film "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon").

Microtonal

These composers experimented with dividing the octave up into more than twelve notes. Some of these composers came upon this through non Western musics others through trying to find a next step to twelve note chromatic writing. Many modern composers use microtones at times (especially some of the non Western composers) but the composers in this group use microtones as a main focus of their compositional style

Haba, Alois 1893-1973 (early part of his career spent as an atonal composer and serialist); Partch, Harry 1901-1974 (perhaps the most well known microtonal composer. He built large numbers of microtonal instruments for use in his pieces); Johnston, Ben b. 1926; Carlos, Walter/Wendy b. 1939 (author of the very influential "Switched on Bach"); Cope, David b. 1941;

Styles Emerging 1950-1959

Electronic-Synthesizer & Music Concrete (Tape Music)

These composers made compositions out of synthesizers and tape recordings sometimes processed in unusual ways. Sometimes they composed for electronics and additional live performers.

Eimert, Herbert 1892-1972 (often combines synthesizers and serialism); Gerhard, Roberto 1896-1970; Luening, Otto 1900-1996 (first wrote hundreds of neo classic works); Badings, Henk 1907-1987; Schaeffer, Pierre b. 1910 (often referred to as the inventor of music concrete - tape music); Ussachevsky, Vladimir 1911-1990; Babbitt, Milton b. 1916 (probably the leading name in combining synthesizers and serialism); Erickson, Robert b. 1917; Maderna, Bruno 1920-1973 (often combines synthesizers and serialism) Bassett, Leslie b. 1923 (famous for electronics with chorus); Powell, Mel b. 1923; Hiller, Lejaren 1924-1994; Huber, Klaus b. 1924; Nono, Luigi 1924-1990 (often combines synthesizers and serialism); Kupferman, Meyer b. 1926 (often combines synthesizers and serialism); Ferrari, Luc b. 1929; Schaffer, Boguslaw b. 1929 (Polish); Lucier, Alvin b. 1931 (some of the most important early sound processing work); Bayle, Francois b. 1932; Subotnick, Morton b. 1933; Davidowsky, Mario b. 1934 (as of late has been writing instrumental music that resembles the base waveforms of synthesizers); Chowning, John b. 1934; Reynolds, Roger b. 1934 (recently completed some of the first work specifically for surround sound); Tenney, James b. 1934; Bodin, Lars Gunnar b. 1935; Behrman, David b. 1937; Curran, Alvin b. 1938; Appleton, Jon b. 1939 (early sampler developer); Carlos, Walter/Wendy b. 1939 (author of the very influential "Switched on Bach"); Harvey, Jonathan b. 1939 (English); Quintanar, Hector b. 1936 (influential Mexican electronic composer); Antunes, Jorge b. 1942 (Brazilian); Amirkhanian, Celli, Joseph b. 1944 (experiments in alternate woodwind controllers); Lansky, Paul b. 1944; Dodge, Charles b. 1945; Anderson, Laurie b. 1947 (one of the few composers with reputations in modern experimental music and modern popular music as well); Eno, Brian b. 1948 (the father of the modern "Ambient" music); Saariaho, Kaija b. 1952 (Finnish composer who works a great deal with tape and acoustic combinations); Machover, Tod b. 1953 (works with unusual alternate interfaces for the computer);

Cage & The American Experimental Movement

Following the lead of John Cage this highly experimental group of composers came to prominence in the 1950's and 1960's. Cage's study of Eastern philosophy's (in particular Zen Buddhism) led him to experiment with our basic conception of what music is. He often wrote works for unconventional media such as Radio's, and prepared pianos (pianos with various items stuck in the strings). He often worked with unconventional musical concepts such as his 4'33" (Four minutes and thirty-three seconds of silence). Cage is also known for Aleatoric (chance) works. In these works the work is written by improvisation and/or chance events (Such as the throwing of sticks) often while the performance is occurring. This is an incredibly diverse group of composers. All that one can really say about them as a group is that they are experimental. Many of these composers used unusual and unique methods of notating music. Many of these composers write in theatrical styles.

Cage, John 1912-1992; Anhalt, Istavan b. 1919 Canadian of Hungarian birth, Often uses tape, chanting and vocal lines in many different languages); Foss, Lukas b. 1922 (neoclassic who later turns to "free atonality" and group improvisations); Brown, Earle b. 1926 (freely atonal composer before 1950's, still often uses traditional ensembles in a style based on texture); Childs, Barney b. 1926; Enriquez, Manuel 1926-1994 (Mexican, also combines serialism with his experimental style); Feldman, Morton 1926-1987 (uses traditional instruments in layered textures with unusual graphic notation); Gaburo, Kenneth 1926-1993 (often very poignant theatrical moments in his work); Tudor, David b. 1926 (very influential pianist and electronic composer who often collaborated with Cage); Erb, Donald b. 1927; Martirano, Salvatore 1927-1995 (recently doing work in the area of computer programs that work with and react to musical improvisation); Druckman, Jacob b. 1928 (often combines electronics, tape, performers and theatrical ideas); Garant, Serge 1929-1986 (French Canadian); Ashley, Robert b. 1930; Austin, Larry b. 1930; Felciano, Richard b. 1930; Martino, Donald b. 1931 (works with extended instrument techniques); Oliveros, Pauline b. 1932 (known as the wild woman with the just intonation accordion, her ideas on sound and nature have been very influential); Corner, Philip b. 1933 (composed the still unperformed "One antipersonnel type-CPU bomb will be thrown into the audience"); Schafer, R. Murray b. 1933 (Canadian, very interested in theatrical ideas); Wolff, Christian b. 1934; Schwartz, Elliot b. 1936; Wilson, Olly b. 1937; Rzewski, Frederick b. 1938; Sollberger, Harvey b. 1938 (flautist and composer); Scott, Stephen b. 1944 (well known for his bowed piano ensemble); La Barbara, Joan b. 1947 (amazing avant garde vocalist and composer, many of the other composers on this group have written specifically for her); Smith, Stuart Saunders b. 1948 (Jazz influenced experimentalist); Dick, Robert b. 1950 (flautist/composer who specializes in extended techniques); Redolfi, Michel b. 1951 (music under water...)

Berio, Stockhausen and the European Avant Garde

Many of these composers started their career as Webern influenced serialists. To this style they added the experimental and aleatoric techniques of Cage, the various electronic music styles, an eclectic variety of all sorts of other things, and theatrical ideas. In their work all of these things are often mixed together in a very eclectic and experimental mix. Again, like the American experimental movement this is an incredibly diverse group of composers. Almost all one can say about them as a whole is that they are experimental. Berio and Stockhausen are the most noted composers of this group.

Scelsi, Giacinto 1905-1998 (started as a serialist is becoming very well known for his experimental non Western influenced late works where he would improvise and have these improvisations transcribed by an assistant), Holmboe, Vagn 1909-1996 (Danish - well known for alternative atonal organizations to serial technique); Blomdahl, Karl-Birger 1916-1968 (Swedish); Haubenstock-Ramati, Roman 1919-1994 (Polish); Lidholm, Ingvar b. 1921 (Swedish); Szollosy, Andras b. 1921 (Hungarian); Bibalo, Antonio b. 1922 (Italian born Norwegian who composes in a free 12 tone style); Xenakis, Iannis 1922-2001 (former architect with very experimental mathematical compositional process); Berio, Luciano 1925-2003; Stockhausen, Karlheinz b. 1928; Schnebel, Dieter b. 1930; Bussotti, Sylvano b. 1931; Birtwistle, Harrison b. 1934; Globakar, Vinko b. 1934; Lachenmann, Helmut b. 1935; Cardew, Cornelius 1936-1981; Nilsson, Bo b. 1937; Morthenson, Jan b. 1940; Bortz, Daniel b. 1943; Ferneyhough, Brian b. 1943; Keuris, Tristan b. 1946; Hedstrom, Ase b. 1950; Janssen, Guus b. 1951; Marta, Istvan b. 1952; Rihm, Wolfgang b. 1952 (sometimes even some Romantic influence shows up in the music of this influential German composer);

Collage or Style Juxtaposition (Post Modern)

Some of these composers use electronic means but most write for traditional ensembles (orchestras, string quartets etc.). In this style the composer superimposes established styles in an eclectic and often symbolic mix. For example having the brass play atonal serialism in the style of Webern while the strings are quoting Beethoven. A great example of this style is Corigliano's first symphony. The work is a programmatic piece remembering his friends who have died of Aids. The work is mostly in a style combining elements of Messiaen and Penderecki. However, throughout the work remembrances occur musically in the piece with an offstage piano breaking into a folk piece, the strings break into a traditional Spanish Tarantella etc. In this group I have included both composers who have made a career out of synthesizing and superimposing various styles and also composers who have found a very distinctive language and blend of styles that they more or less stick with. Although an older style (in modern terms) it has very much come to the fore in the last decade - replacing minimalism as the "in" thing.

Rochberg, George b. 1918 (early music is serialistic); Zimmermann, Bernd Alois 1918-1970; Freedman, Harry b. 1922 (Canadian); Benson, Warren b. 1924; Schuller, Gunther b. 1925 (often works to unite classical and jazz in a style he calls "third stream"); Henze, Hans Werner b. 1926 (brings unusual elements and styles into a background developed from Berg, sometimes serial sometimes freely atonal); Jolas, Betsy b. 1926 (tries to blur the mix between voices and instruments); Hambraeus, Bengt b. 1928; Musgrave, Thea b. 1928 (Scottish but resides in the U.S.); Sculthorpe, Peter b. 1929 (very experimental and sometimes microtonal Australian); Kagel, Mauricio b. 1931 (Kagel's "Ludwig Van" is one of the most important and early works in this field. For this composition fragments of Beethoven pieces are superimposed on each other with altered dynamics, tempi, and articulation); Norgard, Per b. 1932 (uses minimalism with subtle style juxtapositions); Tremblay, Gilles b. 1932; Schifrin, Lalo b. 1932 (in addition to his film scores this Jazz pianist has done a number of avant garde works combining Jazz with aleatory and serialism); Budd, Harold b. 1936; Chihara, Paul b. 1938; Corigliano, John b. 1938 (one of the most prominent living American composers); Bolcom, William b. 1938 (one of the leading Americans in this style); Harbison, John b. 1938 (mixes jazz and serial techniques); Tower, Joan b. 1938 (this well known composer has been very influenced by Messiaen and Crumb); Kolb, Barbara b. 1939; Schwanter, Joseph b. 1943 (mixes elements of Crumb with very tonal sections); Bryars, Gavin b. 1943; Duckworth, William b. 1943; Albright, William b. 1944; Finnissy, Michael b. 1946; Thommessen, Olav Anton b. 1946; Rouse, Christopher b. 1949 (this Crumb student is a colleague of Schwanter at Eastman); Ruders, Poul b. 1949 (Danish); Bainbridge, Simon b. 1952; Hartke, Stephen b. 1952 (subtle mix of neo classic, romantic, Stravinsky, minimalism, jazz, and Gamelan); Daugherty, Michael b. 1954 (very theatrical, has written a great deal of polyrhythmic percussion music); Lindberg, Magnus b. 1958 (Finnish); MacMillan, James b. 1959 (Scottish)

Late Century Soviet & Russian Avant Garde

These are later century Russian composers who managed to explore the late century eclectic, experimental movements despite pressures from the Soviet government and post Soviet chaos in Russia. Although they have been composing for some time these composers have become very popular in the last decade.

Denisov, Edison Vasilevich 1929-1996 (Had a style heavily influenced by Boulez and Berio); Gubaidulina, Sofia b. 1931 (became very internationally acclaimed in the 80's, As with Schnittke she is associated with style collages. Compared with Schnittke her music is often very intense, personal and programmatic); Shchedrin, Rodion b. 1932 (neoclassic style that often sounds like Hindemith or Copland); Schnittke, Alfred 1934-1998 (the most recognized member of this group. He is most well known as an eclectic style collage composer); Kancheli, Giia b. 1935 (Georgian composer well known for large symphonic works with elements of consonant modal composition and Ligeti like sound mass); Silvestrov, Valentin b. 1937 (Ukrainian);

Styles Emerging 1960-1969

Eastern European Textural/Sound Mass composers

After Cage visited Europe in the 1950's many European composers came to the conclusion that serialism and aleatoric writing using all twelve pitches created virtually the same effect. Thus, like many experimental European composers these composers began to mix serialism and Cage. The striking feature of this Eastern European style music is the build and release of tension by flowing through blocks of sound in various textures (polyphony, homophony etc..) and thicknesses (sometimes giving every string player in the orchestra their own part to create incredibly thick tone clusters, sometimes using a bit of microtonality to create thick textures). After its invention this style found its way into many of the other late century experimental movements. Ligeti's *Atmospheres*, and Penderecki's *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* are the two most discussed works in this idiom.

Lutoslawski, Witold 1913-1994; Husa, Karel b. 1921 (retains more of the Bartok style than most of these composers); Serocki, Kazimierz 1922-1981; Ligeti, Gyorgy b. 1923; Baird, Tadeusz 1928-1981; Van de Vate, Nancy b. 1930 (American); Gorecki, Henryk b. 1933 (in the 70's moved out of this style into the Neo Medieval/Renn. group); Penderecki, Krzysztof b. 1933 (late music is much more conservative and almost Neo Romantic; Bresnick, Martin b. 1946 (American); Stucky, Steven b. 1949 (American Ligeti student);

Crumb, George

Although perhaps he could have been included in the style juxtaposition category (or many others) category Crumb has such a reputation and his music such influence that I chose to give him his own listing. His style mixes the sound mass and texture ideas of the modern Eastern European (but usually in a chamber setting instead of a giant orchestral one), many influences of Non Western music, and also Cage inspired experimental concepts.

Crumb. George b. 1929

Styles Emerging 1970-79

Minimalism

Minimalism was a dominant style in Western music from the early 1970s to around 1990. Minimalists often use short ostinatos repeating for extended lengths of time (much longer lengths of time than we are used to). Some minimalists use thick layers of ostinatos, some compose thin transparent pieces, some uses polyrhythmic and other complex relationships. Most minimalists use simple diatonic melodic materials. The style seems to have developed out of Far Eastern musics, Western pop music, and the pandiatonic language of Stravinsky. Many people give the minimalists the credit for returning to tonality to prominence. The three composers generally given credit for the invention of the style are Glass, Riley, and Reich. Although LaMonte Young is not talked about as much now he was very important in the formative stages. The most noted of the younger minimalists are Adams and Torke.

Riley, Terry b. 1935 (very into non Western concepts and music); Young, La Monte b. 1935; Reich, Steve b. 1936 (perhaps the most rhythmically complex minimalist); Glass, Philip b. 1937; Andriessen, Loius b. 1939; Johnson, Tom b. 1939 (born in Greeley, Co); Nyman, Michael b. 1944; Adams, John b. 1947 (uses popular "Americana" style symphonic writing with minimalism, often very polyrhythmic); Gordon, Michael b. 1956 (sometimes called post minimalism for his addition of other elements); Torke, Michael b. 1961 (uses pop/rock instruments in some works);

Eastern European Neo Medieval/Renaissance (new simplicity)

This style was foreshadowed by the 1960's compositions of conservative Polish composer Andrezej Panufnik. The most prominent composers in this group are Estonian Arvo Part and Pole Henryk Gorecki. This style mixes: modal, chant like Medieval or Renaissance melody, counterpoint, and harmony drawn from Eastern Orthodox music; minimalism; and often a romantic style programmatic flair. This style has become very popular. Gorecki's hour long Symphony #3 "A Symphony of Sorrowful Songs" went #6 on the British pop charts in the mid 80's. One additional note about this style. Most of these composers changed to this style from more avant garde idioms. Part was a serialist, Gorecki a notable texture/sound mass composer, Taverner an aleatoric experimentalist etc.

Panufnik, Adrezej 1914-1991(Polish expatriate); Gorecki, Henryk b. 1933; Part, Arvo b. 1935; Tavener, John b. 1944 (English but Greek Orthodox); Weir, Judith b. 1954 (Tavener student);