

# **Report on the Units**

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**June 2006**

**3872/7872/MS/R/06**

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All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

The reports on the Examinations provide information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Mark schemes and Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers.

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### Advanced Subsidiary GCE Music 3872

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## Chief Examiner's Report – GCE MUSIC

### General Comments

Candidates are to be congratulated on the range and quality of musical ability demonstrated in all Units this session. The focus of assessment is placed clearly on recognising and rewarding achievement in a positive manner rather than penalising candidates for what they have not been able to achieve.

This Chief Examiner's Report draws attention to a number of emerging trends this session, which, in the opinion of Examiners, prevented significant numbers of candidates from gaining higher marks. Many of these trends relate to the development of abilities and skills that are fundamental to study at GCE Advanced level. In planning suitable programmes of study, teachers and candidates need to ensure that these skills and techniques are developed as a result of appropriate and regular practice in preparation for the final assessment submissions.

Detailed comments may be found in the following reports on individual Units but, taking an overview, the following issues caused significant concern to senior Examiners:

- Achievement in the A2 performing unit (2553) frequently displayed a striking mismatch between the level of performing technique demonstrated in the recital and the awareness of interpretative approach and musical background demonstrated in the Performance Investigation. An A2 performance needs to display *depth* of musical understanding; the acquisition of appropriate listening and research skills that are demonstrated in the Performance Investigation is a basic prerequisite to the presentation of greater depth of performance understanding at A2. Examiners felt that many Performance Investigations had not been undertaken with the degree of scholarly rigour expected.
- In the composing unit at AS level (2551) Examiners felt that many commentaries on compositions demonstrated a similar lack of preparatory listening. Examiners regard these commentaries as an integral part of the assessment and candidates should not be tempted to see them as a written task to be completed right at the end of the course. The commentaries are designed to "feed" candidates with ideas and provide perspectives on how other composers have responded to similar tasks and made use of similar instrumental resources. Valuable preparatory work here should include looking at instrumental scores to appreciate aspects of layout and markings (such as dynamics and articulation).
- Both written units (2552 and 2555) are well established and numerous Examiners' Reports have been written to advise teachers and candidates how to approach the range of tasks presented by these papers. A major area of concern remains the question of relevance. It is usually clear that candidates have been prepared well in terms of their study of a particular piece of music or a historical period but too often Examiners see essays that merely regurgitate evidence (what the candidate knows) regardless of the question set by Examiners. Such answers cannot hope to gain marks in the higher bands; to do this the writing must be relevant on a *consistent* basis. The ability to organise knowledge and evidence in order to construct an answer that is relevant to a specific question is a fundamental skill expected to be demonstrated at Advanced level and Examiners are firmly committed to maintaining this line in order to uphold the rigour and integrity of the examination.

The issue of tonality remains the area in which candidates' achievements are of most concern to Examiners. The specification recognises the fundamental importance of tonality to music by its identification as an Area of Study that stretches across AS and A2 levels. It is perhaps the most important aspect of the subject to be explored at GCE level and yet Examiners see many able candidates who avoid any references to aspects of tonality in their work. This approach can cause them to fail to gain a significant amount of credit across the specification as a whole. In written units, Examiners regularly see questions that require candidates to address aspects of tonality left blank or (just as worrying) answered with irrelevant details relating to features such as instrumentation, texture or structure.

In preparing candidates for the GCE Music specification, Examiners advise teachers to ensure that candidates engage with aspects of tonality from an early point in the course. This will help to ensure that confident and accurate engagement with (and discussion of) tonality becomes as regular an activity for candidates as referring to details of other musical aspects such as instrumentation, structure and texture.

At present the evidence seen by Examiners suggests that tonality is very much the weak partner and this report must reinforce the clear message that Examiners regard tonality as a fundamental Area of Study in Music at Advanced level. It also reaffirms the fact that assessment units in the OCR specification will continue to require candidates to engage with this important Area of Study at both AS and A2 levels. In order to give candidates the best possible chance to perform to the best of their abilities, centres should ensure that tonality is not avoided and is treated as a major part of any programme of study.

Help and advice on all aspects of the OCR GCE Music specification is available via the OCR website and from INSET meetings. Teachers are encouraged to take advantage of the training courses for GCE Music, which are led by experienced senior Examiners and provide an opportunity for teachers to discuss techniques and examination strategies with Examiners who set, revise and mark the examination Units. At the same time, senior Examiners listen carefully to comments and critical remarks made by delegates. This level of feedback is regarded as highly important and helps OCR to fashion its specification design (as far as possible) to meet the needs of centres and candidates, while maintaining the degree of depth and rigour expected of an Advanced level qualification.

**Principal Examiner's Report  
Unit 2550: Performing**

The examiners would like to thank centres for the meticulous care taken in arranging timetables for practical examinations and examiner visits and for sending helpful information to the examiner; in the vast majority of centres it was apparent that much preparation and thought had been given to ensuring that recitals ran smoothly, to time, and were as enjoyable as possible for the performers, examiners and audiences. Some were fitted within the school or college day, others were presented in evening recitals with substantial audiences present, often at venues away from the school or college. Overall, examiners were well looked-after, with some excellent school lunches provided and on one occasion a packed lunch was provided to be eaten en-route to the next centre. Examiners are also grateful for the help given when making travel arrangements.

Examiners would like to acknowledge the help given by centres in having Section B ensembles on-hand (string quartets, wind ensembles, backing bands, percussion groups and even whole choirs) - often for multiple performances - and providing accompanists who were helpful and supportive to nervous candidates. Candidates and examiners alike appear to value the live assessment that OCR offers in this most communicative of the performing arts. It is central to OCR's approach that examiners – who are all musicians and performers themselves - enjoy meeting young musicians and that, in turn, the candidates can enjoy playing or singing to an approachable examining team.

Candidates are welcome to introduce their pieces, or to put songs in context, and - if an audience is present - to acknowledge applause, the accompanist or any backing players. In many centres there was a real sense of occasion and the examiner was able to be embedded in the audience and the department in a less intimidating manner. Ideally, balancing of electric instruments and amplifiers should take place before the "performance" begins and candidates need to consider how they link their recital pieces with an audience present. Dynamic levels should be appropriate to the acoustic and size of the performance space. Page turners are very welcome in the examination room and it is quite acceptable for a member of staff to contribute to the ensembles/duos offered as part of the performances!

Examiners also appreciate the timetabling of AS and A2 (2553) recitals in separate blocks, wherever possible, to facilitate examiners' manipulation of minidisks and paperwork. By once again using minidisk wherever possible this session, examiners have attained a better quality of recording, making the process of moderation and appeal easier and more accurate. Centres (and audiences) are **not** permitted to record the performances, either aurally or on video.

Another pleasing aspect of this year's performances for 2550 was the wide variety of styles and instruments offered for assessment. Examples included: a candidate offering 'cello for Section A and marimba for Section B; a candidate who played Chopin on the piano for Section A and then fronted two Coldplay numbers for Section B. There were also some folk instrument recitals, a clutch of counter-tenor performances and some gamelan ensembles.

Only a very few recitals were clearly "last-minute" offerings; some were short (as brief as 2 minutes for Section A) and a number were long (the record this year was 16 minutes; the specification gives 8 minutes as the maximum). Nevertheless, examiners heard countless recitals that had clearly been planned in detail, tried out in public before the examination, and delivered with confidence and flair. Short over-runs, for the sake of artistic integrity, are not frowned upon.

At least **two** pieces should be performed for Section A (Specification: page 10), which may be from the same work provided that they demonstrate a **range** of techniques and expressive understanding.

Candidates **must** provide the examiner with copies of their music for **both** sections (solo parts of accompanied pieces will suffice). This is vital in order for the examiner to assess accuracy and performance directions and, later, for the process of standardisation and scaling - and would be used again in the event of a result enquiry. All photocopies are destroyed once these processes are complete. It is sometimes not helpful if the presented edition has wide variations from the version that the candidate has prepared. Downloads from the internet or photocopies from guitar magazines should be "marked up" as fully as possible, with stave notation alongside tablature. Providing music after the performance is not acceptable, especially as the examiners' letters to centres in advance of visits confirm that copies will be required to facilitate assessment. Equally unacceptable is the presentation to the examiner of a CD recording of an intended performance.

All examinations are recorded onto minidisk or cassette tapes. Examiners will bring their own supply of these, which will be marked up with the information provided by centres **a week earlier** than the visit. The information needed by the examiner is:

- name and number of candidate;
- whether entered for AS or A2;
- instrument and programme for section A (**with timings and grades**);
- instrument and option for Section B (**with timings and grades**);
- a timetable for the visit;
- directions to the centre; and
- photocopies of all music to be performed.

#### **General Comments about Section B (2550)**

- The specification makes it clear (on page 25) that this section of the unit is specifically designed to **extend** candidates' understanding of performance techniques **beyond the evidence produced for assessment in Section A**. Centres are reminded that there are no forbidden combinations of instruments - e.g. clarinet/sax, violin/viola, flute/piccolo, piano/harpsichord, trumpet/cornet/flugelhorn - these are seen as 'extensions' of the skills offered in Section A, in the spirit of the specification. A reproduction of the same performers as in Section A (usually voice/instrument plus piano) is **not** acceptable, even if the repertoire is different. Candidates using a backing track with headphones need to ensure that the examiner and audience can also hear the whole line-up!
- The level of difficulty remains the same for Section B as in Section A (Specification: page 69)
- There were very few examples of candidates offering **own composition** for section B, which was disappointing. Again, a full score of the composition must be given to the examiner. A solo piece with no accompaniment will receive only limited credit (although the composition may be self-accompanied). The specification states clearly (on page 10) that candidates must compose for the instrument/voice used in Section A, with **one** other accompanying or melodic instrument.
- Centres need to be aware that in an accompanied performance, or in any ensemble, the candidate's part should **not** be doubled by another part (particularly in the right hand of the piano accompaniment) on any consistent basis. Similarly, the candidate's part should be clearly audible for the purposes of assessment. Where an ensemble is offered, centres should assess whether the material allows the opportunity to display the skills of balance, co-ordination and intonation. This problem arises where duets comprise little more than antiphonal exchanges between two parts or an accompanied song where each candidate sings a solo verse.
- In some centres, depending on timetabling and nervous candidates, it may be more practical to present the Section B performance first, which causes no problems at all, providing the examiner is informed.

## Principal Moderator's Report

### Unit 2551 Composing 1

#### General Comments

In this unit, candidates have the opportunity to learn about the fundamental principles of Western Tonal Harmony in the first section of the submission and explore a more personal approach to composition in the second. The Expressive Use of Instrumental Techniques is the focus for the composing task and moderators have been pleased to see candidates confidently producing a range of ideas in Section B.

Unit 2551 is a composing unit, marked by teachers and moderated externally.

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback on the moderation process and to comment on the accuracy of teacher assessment. In this way centres will get an overview of best practice in terms of administrative procedures and be able to prepare their candidates with maximum effectiveness.

#### Evaluation of the range of work presented:

##### Section A: The Language of Western Tonal Harmony

The specification outlines the way in which harmonic understanding can be demonstrated by candidates, through the completion of exercises that require the addition of a bass line and harmony to a given melody. There is flexibility in the choice of suitable material and suggestions are made in the specification. Teachers are thus able to teach from 'real music', with which candidates have some measure of identification.

Successful centres will often provide a range of exercises; not all candidates need submit the same set. String quartets, requiring the reading of three clefs and an understanding of stylistic considerations, may prove to be a difficult starting point for some in the first year of the course. Nevertheless, many centres find that, with careful planning, the AS harmony work can be an important preparation for stylistic exercises in the A2 Unit 2554, should this be a favoured option. Centres are reminded that exercises in Renaissance Counterpoint cannot, by definition, form any part of the submission for this unit although they are an option in Unit 2554.

There continues to be some misunderstanding about the provision of an incipit for the minimum requirement of two exercises to be completed in full texture. Candidates are not expected to be able to invent an original accompaniment incorporating inner parts but rather they should be able to continue a texture given in the opening bars. In longer examples, candidates may wish to explore varying the texture at a suitable point later in the exercise.

#### Key Issues:

- Ensure that candidates go on beyond root position primary triads to work with a larger range of harmonic vocabulary, as detailed in the specification, page 33.
- Candidates must always give an indication of harmonic 'thinking' by providing Roman numerals, figured bass or guitar style chords. This is particularly important in 2-part textures. A useful analogy can be found in mathematics, where to present the final answer without explanatory working would be considered an insufficient solution.
- Some exercises should contain opportunities for modulation.
- Provide an incipit as a benchmark of the textural and harmonic language of the extract.
- Avoid submissions that consist entirely of chorale/hymn treatments, simple text book style preliminary exercises or present modal folk melodies rather than minor key exercises.
- Electronically generated templates can inadvertently contain errors. Check these carefully.



## **Section B: The Expressive Use of Instrumental Technique**

Candidates may choose to submit a composition for 4-10 instruments or an arrangement of a lead sheet. The number of arrangements this year fell slightly to 10% overall. Although some were outstanding, many failed to demonstrate any invention beyond the allocation of material to instruments. Considerable creative input is required to access the full range of marks and candidates should be encouraged not only to provide counter-melodies, an introduction or additional instrumental sections but also to consider more adventurous manipulation of the harmonic, rhythmic and structural elements.

The following observations are relevant to both Section B options.

### **Materials and Use of Medium/Structure and Technique**

Candidates worked with a range of ideas, employing a variety of strategies to extend and develop their materials, often with flair and imagination in the strongest submissions. There was, once again, heartening indications that candidates were engaging with the world of live music making and drawing on their considerable performing expertise, and that of their peers, to inform their composing.

Some candidates, however, seemed afraid to use ledger lines! If optimum range is being considered, instrumental writing **should** be straying beyond the confines of the stave, particularly in the treble and tenor voices of saxophone, flute, 'cello and violin, for example.

### **Notation and Realisation**

There is now no longer a formal requirement to include parts for either arrangement or composition options. However, for practical purposes, many candidates used parts in rehearsal and final recordings. Looking at individual parts is a very efficient way to check for consistency in dynamics and more detailed performance markings for each instrument. Dull, uninteresting or one-handed piano parts, for example, are instantly revealed.

Over 40% of candidates provided a live or part live realisation of their work. A hand-full of candidates submitted their work on cassette tape but most work was successfully recorded on audio CD. Such performances were refreshing and brought the candidate's work to life.

Some candidates went to considerable lengths to provide musically edited, sequenced realisations and this marks a welcome improvement over a previous tendency of many such realisations to be devoid of expressive shaping and rather bland.

### **Contextual Awareness**

There is an opportunity here for many candidates to improve their marks considerably. Some candidates seemed resigned to being unable to gain more than minimal marks because they failed to mention any listening. The commentary should avoid a blow-by-blow description of what is in the score but rather provide an explanation of the evolution of the composition and the influences upon it. Good commentaries were informed, relevant, insightful and articulate. Above all, they had clearly been given consideration from the outset rather than being hastily constructed at the end of the composing process, which misses the point of the relevance of the music of others feeding in to the creative act.

Intelligent listening is an important focus but, in addition, there is much to be gained from the reading of scores alongside listening activity. This is an important way of learning about orchestration and score layout; it has a valuable role in giving models of good practice for example in the writing of standard drum patterns or integrated woodwind scoring.

### Key Issues

- Explore the full range of instruments and sonorities to produce parts that are idiomatic.
- Consider modulation as a means of generating interest and developing ideas.
- Use the full range of performance markings for players, not just dynamics and tempi.
- Be explicit about the way specific listening connects with composing.
- The use of technology can be helpful in a variety of ways but do not underestimate the time needed to become sufficiently competent in its usage in order to produce truly creative results.

### Centre Assessment of Coursework

The number of centres whose assessment of the work of their candidates was within acceptable limits remained similar to previous years.

Moderators found that where teachers had completed the Optional Comments Box, in justification of their marks awarded, marking tended to be more accurate. Even the most experienced teachers should consciously give fresh consideration to the criteria when assessing the work of a new group of candidates.

The purpose of moderation is to ensure that centre assessment corresponds with agreed national standards. In large centres, where teachers regularly experience a wide range of candidate ability, assessment tends to be more accurate.

Moderators' adjustments have remained relatively small this year and the instances of centres being wildly optimistic or unduly severe regarding their candidates' work seem to be fewer.

### Key Issues

#### Section A

- Reward accuracy in Notation. Legibility is perfectly possible in hand written exercises.
- The assessment of Technique requires the careful consideration of all four separate elements: bass line shape, voice-leading, modulation and continuation of texture.

#### Section B

- Avoid over rewarding notation when performance detail is insufficient or when realisations fail to communicate the expressive intention of the composer.
- Assessment of commentaries should reflect the range of listening as well as the significance attributed to this by the candidate.

### Administration

Centres and teachers new to the OCR specification are reminded that it is advisable to attend the feedback INSET courses in order to access important support and guidance in the preparation of candidates for this unit, as well as to gain an over view of correct administrative procedures.

Moderators were grateful that many centres were meticulous in their adherence to submission dates for coursework and in their preparation of portfolios for moderation. Successful candidates took pride in the way their work was presented and there were fewer problems this year with CDs failing to play on hi-fi equipment.

## *Report on the Units taken in June 2006*

Centres working together as a consortium are reminded to process their entries in accordance with JCQ and OCR requirements.

### **Key Issues**

- Use the Coursework Cover Sheet checklist to ensure nothing is omitted from portfolios.
- Consider the use of the electronic CCS available on-line to minimise the risk of arithmetic error.
- Some large centres have successfully used spread-sheets to record the break down of marks for this unit, thus minimising arithmetic errors.
- Round up half marks when Section B total is divided.
- Label exercises, scores, commentaries and CDs/tapes with both centre and candidate number.
- Respond as soon as possible to any correspondence from your moderator.

## Unit 2552: Introduction to Historical Study

### General Comments

Examiners were pleased to see a good level of positive achievement from most candidates who sat this Unit, although they remain concerned that relatively few candidates perform with sufficient security across all three sections of the paper to take their total marks into the highest bands. This point has been made repeatedly in Examiners' reports but it is still not evident that Centres and candidates are reading these reports or acting upon Examiners' advice and recommendations.

OCR also offers specialised feedback from Examiners at annual INSET sessions, and Centres that receive marks below expectation in this Unit are advised to consider attendance at an INSET course tailored to their particular requirements. A list of forthcoming INSET courses for music is available on the OCR website or from the publications department.

In this session, candidates' choices in Section A were divided fairly evenly between the movement from a piano concerto by Mozart and Lalo Schifrin's original soundtrack for the *Mission: Impossible* television series, which proved a popular alternative.

In general, Examiners noted a slight improvement in performance in Section B of the paper, and this was most encouraging. However, it still remains a cause for concern that scripts from some Centres suggest strongly that candidates have been prepared well for **either** the prescribed orchestral repertoire **or** the jazz recordings, while the second option has been covered in a much more cursory fashion. Examiners wish to remind Centres that, in order to give candidates the best possible chance to achieve high marks, all three scores of prescribed orchestral repertoire **and** all three jazz recordings should be prepared thoroughly.

The format of this Unit and the style of questioning are now firmly established, and it is important that candidates focus on answering the specific questions set by Examiners. Many able and literate candidates fail to gain important credit because they simply record what they know rather than apply their knowledge to focus on the question set by the Examiners. This shortcoming has been noted in many previous Examiners' reports, and it is a significant contributor to candidates' inability to break into the higher mark bands in terms of their overall totals.

Once again, it was extremely disappointing that large numbers of candidates avoided writing answers for any questions that required a degree of engagement with the Area of Study of tonality. This is a fundamental aspect of the subject and will not be avoided. Candidates must accept that they will be presented with questions that require them to address issues relating to key, chords, harmony, modulation and cadences. At the moment, Examiners see far too many answers to questions with a focus on tonality that refer to details of instrumentation or texture. Such detail is irrelevant and will not receive any credit. The overriding impression remains that many candidates are not being prepared for this Unit in a way that enables them to engage with many of the most basic elements of this over-arching Area of Study, whose importance to the subject is reflected in its inclusion at both AS and A2 levels of the specification.

### Teacher Tips for the Unit

- Ensure that candidates are prepared thoroughly to answer questions of all **THREE** prescribed orchestral works and all **THREE** jazz recordings.
- In preparatory exercises, help candidates to focus their answering so that what they write addresses the *specific* terms of each question: for example, questions on aspects of harmony need to be answered by observations relating to chords, tonality, cadences, etc.
- Ensure that candidates engage with aspects of the Area of Study tonality from an early point in the course, so that they become familiar with techniques for writing about issues relating to chords, keys and cadences.
- Remind candidates that they should answer questions on **EITHER** Extract 1A **OR** Extract 1B, but not both! Examiners continue to see a number of scripts that answer questions on both extracts in Section A and then leave candidates with insufficient remaining time to address the questions in Sections B and C in detail.

### Comments on Individual Questions

#### Section A

**Extract 1A** MOZART, *Piano concerto in B $\flat$* , K456, 2<sup>nd</sup> movement, bars 0-21<sup>2</sup>, 21<sup>2</sup>-42<sup>2</sup> & 159<sup>2</sup>-167<sup>1</sup>, Bilson / English Baroque Soloists / Gardiner (1986) DG Archiv 463 115-2, track 8

- 1 Most candidates were able to identify the binary structure of the extract and some noted that the 'B' section was longer than the 'A' section. Relatively few candidates noted the more specific contrasts in phrase lengths (the wording of the question pointed towards this) and compared the 4+4 structure of 'A' with the 4+6+3 pattern on 'B'.
- 2 This was answered accurately by most candidates.
- 3 Examiners gave credit for any valid key identified, even if not in order, but the accompanying bar reference needed to be accurate in relation to the key specified in order to receive credit. In general, answers to this question (which required candidates to engage with an aspect of tonality) were not precise, and very few candidates received the maximum six marks.
- 4 This question was answered well by candidates, with many receiving full marks. Common mistakes with "near miss" answers included omission of the E $\flat$  in bar 9, a missed C $\sharp$  in bar 10, and the mis-pitching of the high A at the end of bar 10 (which should have been checked in the 'dovetailing' of the line with its printed continuation in bar 11).
- 5 Many candidates received both credit marks for this question, with the most common answer being "chromatic scale".
- 6 This question was answered well by most candidates, and many answers received full marks. Almost all candidates were able to locate the position of chord **VI**, but Examiners were surprised that many candidates failed to recognise a cliché **IIb-Ic-V** progression at the end of bar 20.
- 7 Not all candidates were able to identify the C $\sharp$  as a lower auxiliary note. Many candidates gave "passing note" or "pivot note" as the answer, betraying a degree of confusion relating to the Area of Study techniques of melodic variation.

- 8 Many candidates identified the two notes decorated in the recorded performance accurately, but a significant number of candidates circled incorrect notes adjacent to those that were decorated: for example, the semiquaver A in bar 25 and the penultimate note (D) in bar 29.
- 9 Most candidates were able to provide precise bar and beat references for the spread chord **(a)** and the demisemiquaver octave ascent **(c)**, although references for the right-hand triplet figuration **(b)** were generally far less accurate.
- 10 Candidates who had listened carefully and had appreciated the chromatic nature of the bass line found this an easy question, and many answers received full marks. Several “near misses” moved mainly in chromatic steps but included occasional intervals of a tone in the line. Checking of the final written pitch of the bass line at the start of bar 48 against the printed melody at that point should have drawn attention to errors in the notation of the line, prompting some reconsideration of the pitches.
- 11 Examiners were disappointed that many answers failed to address aspects of the melodic line, preferring to refer to irrelevant details of instrumentation or texture. Relatively few answers referred to features such as the chromatic ascent or the changed rhythm of the cadential figure in bar 51.
- 12 Examiners saw many vague and imprecise answers to this question, revealing a lack of focus on important details of instrumentation. The best answers referred to the addition of a flute on the two-note “sigh” motif, the more sustained string accompaniment in **Variation 2** or the lack of woodwind accompaniment at the cadence point.

**Extract 1B** LALO SCHIFRIN, Main theme from *Mission: Impossible*, Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra / Townsend (1996), Silva Screen Records FILMXCD 184, track 18, 00'42"- 01'29", 01'30"- 01'51", 02'12" – 02'54" & 02'54" – 03'30".

- 13 There were very few good answers to this question. Issues of overall structure are often set as opening questions in order to draw candidates' attention to the general pattern of the extract. Some candidates were able to refer to the ABAB structure of **Passage 1i**, but many were too preoccupied with aspects of the bass line in their comments.
- 14 Most candidates were able to identify the ornament missing from the printed line in bar 1, although many wrote the word “trill” in full rather than the accepted ornament sign, *tr*.
- 15 The majority of candidates correctly identified the use of ostinato, although Examiners also allowed credit for the musically less specific terminology “repetition”.
- 16 This was answered accurately by most candidates. Almost all answers referred to use of the bass-line rhythm and pitch outline, but only a few mentioned the chordal nature of the music, or the parallel movement of parts.
- 17 Many answers to this question were vague and imprecise, with few candidates making a real attempt to *describe* features of the trombone melody. Many answers gained some credit by referring to aspects such as the use of an ostinato pattern and rhythmic displacement.
- 18 Almost all candidates identified the rhythm pattern accurately in answer to this question.

- 19 The question command word was *describe*, and Examiners were disappointed that many candidates failed to gain full marks in this question because they disregarded this important instruction. Good answers referred to significant features of the flute solo line such as the wide range covered, use of pitch bending, leaps, triplet figuration and leaps to high notes.
- 20 Many scripts provided accurate evidence in answer to this question, although under “similarities”, while most candidates noted that the ostinato bass line was the same, relatively few commented on the use of the same harmonic progression in **Passage 1ii**. In general, most candidates were able to identify at least two differences accurately.
- 21 Examiners were very pleased that so many candidates received full marks for answers to this question. Most candidates were able to locate the key points of harmonic change and also identify the chord progression accurately.
- 22 This question was answered well by most candidates, although some weaker answers simply attempted to gain credit by amending slightly the detail given in the *Chorus 1* column. This detail was provided as a guide, in order to outline the level of detail required in candidates’ answers, but Examiners expected candidates to *listen* carefully to the recorded extract in order to pick out the important musical characteristics of *Chorus 2*.
- 23 Some candidates received full marks for answers to this question, but in general notation missed some chromatic movement (the opening three notes, for example) and there was a degree of confusion over the leap down of a 4<sup>th</sup> at the end of bar 69.
- 24 Some candidates managed to notate the three rhythmic units accurately, but the placing of rests and the alignment of notes was often poor in relation to the printed melody line.

### Teacher Tips for Section A

- **DO encourage candidates to address the key command words in questions: “Describe” should result in a clear and accurate description of the music at the relevant point; “compare” should produce a clear attempt to compare two distinct sections.**
- **DO encourage a clear focus on the key aspects of music required by each question: a question on structure, for example, needs to focus on how an extract is “constructed” in terms of phrases, motivic development, etc. Use of capital letters (ABA, AABB) can often be helpful here in terms of providing candidates with a clear and accurate way in which to articulate aspects of structure.**
- **DO ensure that candidates have opportunities to practice working through previous examples of Section A questions and skeleton scores for this Unit before the real examination. This is particularly important for answers that require melodic dictation in treble and/or bass clefs. The general pattern seen by Examiners indicates that candidates are better at melody writing in the treble clef, but experience some difficulty isolating clear bass lines in recordings.**

**Section B**

**Extract 2**     **BERLIOZ, *Symphonie fantastique*, fourth movement, bars 140 to 164.**

- 25**        This question was answered accurately by most candidates.
- 26**        Many candidates received full marks for their answers to this transcription question. Some candidates clearly had little idea how to approach this predictable task, which was disappointing for Examiners.
- 27**        Most candidates produced accurate answers in sections **(a)** and **(c)**, but there was a great degree of confusion in relation to section **(b)**. Examiners were disappointed that so many candidates' answers became bogged down in details of muting rather than providing a clear focus on the retuning of the kettle drum. The specification makes it clear that in **Section B** candidates are expected to be familiar with all marking on the specified score.
- 28**        Many answers referred to the antiphonal exchanges in the music and to the chordal texture, but few noted the increasing truncation of the exchanges or the lightening of texture towards the end of the passage.
- 29**        Almost all candidates identified the use of a minor scale, but relatively few answers provided the more precise description of the line as that of a *melodic* minor scale.
- 30**        Many candidates were familiar with the string playing technique of double/triple stopping and answered this question accurately.
- 31**        This question was not well answered, with many candidates ignoring the instruction to write about Berlioz's use of *rhythm*. Examiners saw many answers that dealt with irrelevant aspects of instrumentation and/or texture. Candidates who did write about aspects of rhythm mentioned features such as the opening dotted figure, the punctuation provided by the powerful *tutti* chords and the use of triplet figuration later in the passage. Very few candidates addressed the question fully and went on to suggest how these rhythms helped to build excitement in the passage. Examiners were surprised by this, since the aspect of increasing excitement is very evident in any performance of the work. This emphasises the need for candidates to appreciate the prescribed orchestral works as *sound*, not just as notes on a page.
- 32**        Candidates still tend to avoid any engagement with aspects of tonality, and this was very evident in most answers to this question. Very few answers went beyond a basic identification of the initial key of g minor, whereas the passage contained a remarkably adventurous section in which Berlioz juxtaposes opposing remote tonal centres of g minor and D<sup>b</sup> major. Very few candidates seem to have been made aware of this unusual use of tonality in their preparation of this prescribed work.
- 33**        Examiners were pleased that so many candidates were able to identify with accuracy the main features of the final bars of the movement. It was clear that this aspect of the prescribed movement had been prepared effectively. Most answers received full or near-maximum marks.



**Extract 3** COUNT BASIE & HIS ORCHESTRA, *Jumpin' at the Woodside* (1938), from *Count Basie with his Orchestra and his Rhythm Section, 1937-1943*, Giants of Jazz CD 53072, track 1, 01'08" – 01'40".

- 34 (a)** Almost all candidates answered sections **(a)** and **(b)** correctly, but there was a degree of confusion in relation to the identity of the trumpet soloist in section **(c)**. Many candidates incorrectly identified the soloist as Harry "Sweets" Edison, but a careful reading of the sleeve notes accompanying the recording specified by OCR would have made it clear that the soloist in the *specified* performance was Buck Clayton.
- 35** Most answers referred to the fact that the accompanying instruments dropped out at the start of the recorded extract, but only a few candidates mentioned that the trumpet played in a much higher register than the accompaniment or that the number of accompanying instruments had been reduced from the previous chorus.
- 36** Candidates answered this question well, noting the use of an ostinato/riff pattern and identifying significant accompaniment characteristics such as longer note duration, chordal texture and a more sustained line in the saxophones.
- 37** Most candidates received full marks for their answers to this question, displaying strong awareness of the location of Lester Young's tenor saxophone solo. Some perceptive listeners also mentioned the addition of brass instruments to the accompaniment.
- 38** This question was not well answered, and very few candidates appeared to be able to identify specific characteristics of the recorded extract that were typical of Basie's style. Most observations centred on musical features that could equally well have applied to *any* early jazz recording. Relatively few candidates appeared to be aware of Basie's "trademark" features such as the extensive use of a rhythm section to maintain a fast, driving tempo, or the standard "four-to-a bar" feel of the music so evident in the recorded extract.
- 39** Examiners were surprised that so many candidates were not able to identify the exact year in which *Jumpin' at the Woodside* was recorded.

### **Teacher Tips for Section B**

*(Many of these tips repeat observations from previous reports that remain valid)*

- **DO make study of the prescribed repertoire a regular part of preparation for the Unit. It is important that candidates get to know the music thoroughly.**
- **DO help candidates to find their way around scores, especially in the early stages of the AS course. It is important that candidates gain confidence in handling the printed scores of prescribed orchestral repertoire.**
- **DO ensure that candidates listen to the prescribed works as regularly as possible: candidates need to appreciate the music as sound, not just as notes on the page.**
- **DO read the sleeve notes accompanying the prescribed recordings carefully; these details should be regarded as the *primary* source of authoritative information about personnel involved in the jazz recording sessions.**
- **DO NOT become preoccupied with the printed detail of complex modern transcriptions of jazz repertoire; study of scores is NOT required in this part of Section B.**
- **DO NOT leave preparation of the prescribed repertoire until the last minute; this will not help candidates to become thoroughly familiar with the music they need to study.**
- **DO NOT forget that the prescribed repertoire changes regularly. Consult the OCR website for the prescribed repertoire relevant to any particular session of this Unit.**

## Section C

Candidates' answers tended to favour questions **40** (developments in trumpet construction), **42** (contrasts in jazz recordings over time) and **43** (critical responses to Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*), with few candidates choosing to answer questions on the development of the orchestra from Haydn to Schubert (**41**) or the performance contexts of the prescribed repertoire (**44**).

Examiners are encouraged by a steady improvement in this section of the Unit over time, and it is now clear that most candidates are aware of the need to address issues of performance context rather than musical detail of the prescribed repertoire in their answers.

In general, the best answers were concise and direct in addressing the specific question set by Examiners, whereas weaker essays tended to avoid addressing the question directly, and frequently degenerated into passages of irrelevance and/or repetition, occasionally betraying a degree of confused understanding.

It is important that candidates acquire the basic skills of organising knowledge, and structuring it to address a particular focus in their writing. Intelligent and musically able candidates who have performed well in **Sections A** and **B** of the Unit can lose valuable marks in this section if they simply regurgitate what they know rather than attempt to answer the question set by the Examiners. Practice essay writing is essential preparation for this part of the Unit, and without it candidates will not be able to develop the practical skills required to do well in this section.

- 40** Most candidates were aware of the advantages of Weidinger's trumpet in terms of increased range and technical agility, but many answers betrayed a degree of confusion by referring to its use of valves rather than keys to obtain notes outside the harmonic series. In general, comments on Miles Davis' exploitation of the modern valve trumpet were more accurate and informed. The best answers were able to draw on specific detail from the two prescribed works to support their observations on improvements in the design of the trumpet.
- 41** Very few candidates chose to answer this question, although it followed a common theme in requiring candidates to outline the development of the orchestra over time. Most answers provided relevant details from Haydn's use of the orchestra for discussion, but overall comments relating to Schubert's specific use of the orchestra in his "*Unfinished*" symphony were less detailed, and frequently failed to contrast sufficiently with Haydn's orchestra.
- 42** This question required candidates to display knowledge of the development of recording techniques and related technology during the first half of the twentieth century. A few candidates misinterpreted this as an instruction to describe contrasts in the musical detail of the two pieces, but most answers revealed a good awareness of the ways in which recording processes developed over time. Many answers commented on the improved quality of recorded sound and the replacement of shellac 78rpm recordings with the increased recording time of the LP vinyl disc. The best answers also displayed some awareness of the increasing influence of the recording engineer as a result of individual microphones used in recording sessions.

- 43** Examiners saw some very pleasing answers to this question, with many candidates displaying a strong awareness of the contexts in which prescribed repertoire would have received its first performances. There was some degree of confusion relating to the composition of audiences for the “classical” repertoire: some candidates appeared to be unaware of the different types of audiences for which Haydn, Berlioz and Schubert would have been writing. The weakest answers based on the jazz repertoire tended to produce a generalised and unspecific history of jazz and made little attempt to provide details of the types of audience who would have heard this music for the first time.

### **Teacher Tips for Section C**

- **DO provide candidates with opportunities to organise their ideas in practice ‘essays’ before the examination itself. This is VITAL preparation for this section of the Unit.**
- **DO explore aspects such as instrument development, the nature and composition of audiences, performing conditions and social and cultural background to the prescribed repertoire.**
- **DO help candidates to focus on the detail that is relevant to the question that Examiners have set.**
- **DO NOT become preoccupied with irrelevant biographical detail of performers and composers.**

...and remember:

**This is an A-level MUSIC course. Time spent LISTENING attentively is NOT time wasted; intelligent background listening can be of enormous help to candidates in developing a sense of context for this section of the Unit and in broadening candidates’ musical understanding.**

## **Principal Examiner's Report**

### **2553: Performing: Interpretation**

#### **General Comments**

As in past years, there have been some absolutely outstanding performances from young musicians this year; well-prepared, musically and intelligently presented. These recitals often represent literally years of practice, much of which is outside candidates' usual school hours, and it is always the examiners' pleasure to be able to witness them. Indeed, overall, very few recitals were not able to demonstrate consistent evidence of positive achievement in performing.

The use of minidisks to record the Performing Examination is now in its second year and has proved successful. However, it is important that centres realise they are not allowed to make concurrent recordings of the Performing Examination on the day.

Most centres have now realised the importance of providing their examiners with the necessary information **at least one week** prior to the examination date. Unfortunately, in some instances the information has been incomplete, making examiners' administration prior to the visit difficult to complete. The consequence of this can be a disruption of the flow of proceedings on the day itself. Centres are reminded they need to send full details of their candidates, including names, candidate numbers, instruments, repertoire (including standards of pieces to be performed), exact timings (including time for stage management) and copies of the scores. These requirements are listed in the letter sent to centres by examiners confirming the date of their visit.

#### **Comments on Individual Sections**

##### **Section A: Recital**

Examiners reported listening to a delightful variety of recitals this year on a range of instruments reflecting a wealth of different styles. In most centres the rubric is followed successfully in this part of the examination though, unfortunately, there are a few recurrent exceptions. Centres need to check that they are fulfilling the criteria detailed below.

There needs to be a musical and chronological focus to the repertoire presented. This means that **all** the music offered for an A2 recital must be linked in terms of musical style and time. Thus "arias through the ages", which may include music from Purcell to Britten, is not sufficiently focused in terms of musical time. This also holds true for "preludes" or "dance movements" if they are not also focused within a particular time period. This is the most common infringement with respect to Section A and it has repercussions for the Performance Investigation (see next section).

Candidates are able to access the whole range of marks if the music presented is grade 6 standard or above. If a proportion or all of the music played is below grade 6, the full range of marks cannot be accessed. It is not in candidates' interest to perform music that stretches their performing ability beyond their technical capabilities.

Candidates need to perform music that is idiomatic for their instrument. It is not advisable to perform the solo line or accompaniment part only.

Examiners have noted an improvement overall in the nature of scores presented in terms of electric guitar and drum kit, though there are still instances where candidates (particularly in

rock styles) are held back by aspects that should have been prepared more thoroughly and musically beforehand. These include aspects such as the aural effectiveness of amplification. Sometimes the balance between soloists and the rest of the ensemble (or the backing track) is not effectively considered. Some examiners have reported listening to performances which have been uncomfortably loud.

Electric guitar and kit players also need to consider the clarity of their scores. If tablature is used, there also needs to be conventional rhythmic, melodic and harmonic notation too, as well as some indication of the performance's structure and dynamics, articulation and conventions. It is heartening to see how some centres have really taken this on board, presenting scores which illuminate the performance to take place in very creative, imaginative ways.

Equally concerning is the number of clearly able electric guitar and drum kit players who perform with a high degree of fluency, accuracy and style but ignore any dynamic markings that are indicated in the score.

Centres often ask about improvisation with regard to recitals. The current version of the OCR specification does not have a separate set of marking criteria for candidates who present an improvised recital. However, examiners do appreciate the fact that within some styles, improvisation is an integral feature and are keen to accommodate this. At present, the marking criteria can accommodate up to 50% improvisation within the recital. There needs to be written indications on the score where and how this is to be incorporated, showing how it relates to the overall recital.

Candidates and their accompanists are reminded of the need to tune carefully beforehand. This aspect of aural attentiveness is not always given the proper attention it needs; this can result in some unfortunate repercussions that could well be avoided. This process must be given due care and attention; examiners are always happy, and indeed expect, to wait whilst this happens.

Examiners reported that, on the whole, the standard of accompanying this year was acceptable and in many cases, outstanding. Diligent rehearsing and preparation beforehand, where the balance is adjusted as necessary, will obviously pay dividends for the candidates on the day.

There were fewer instances this year where candidates' solo lines were doubled by the accompaniment or another part, and this was most encouraging.

The recital must be presented as a solo performance or as a performance as part of an ensemble. It cannot be a mixture of these two disciplines.

Examiners continue to note how well candidates rise to the challenge of the live performance, even though they may be nervous!

## **Section B: Performance Investigation**

At the inception of the current specification five years ago, OCR included details of what was expected of candidates with reference to the then new Performance Investigation. The six areas of the marking criteria were explained, giving details of what the examiners would be looking for and rewarding. There was also some exemplar material included. Five years on it is gratifying to see how this part of the unit informs candidates' performing and understanding in such a positive way and centres continue to express their appreciation of this area of the course. However, it has become apparent this year that centres may well benefit from being reminded of the marking criteria as examiners have reported some

concerns over submissions that give the impression of being rushed or written to a particular formula that does not completely address the criteria. To this end, this year's report will focus on the shortcomings that have been noted. Also included are two appendices that explain the criteria and give exemplar material.

It is important to view the two sections of this unit as one; they are very much related. To this end there needs to be an acceptable focus to the music presented in Section A so that the performances compared in Section B relate to all of the repertoire played by the candidate in a consistent and demonstrable way (it is not sufficient to have just one piece obviously related to the Performance Investigation and the remainder randomly added). The purpose of the comparison in Section B is to deepen the candidate's understanding of the whole genre and style that has been performed, not just one piece. Thus the choice of repertoire for the recital obviously needs careful consideration at the start of the course.

It is a concern that many candidates still present complete recordings of the interpretations being discussed with no evidence of an attempt to extract specific, appropriate aural examples in support of individual points. In addition, a common mistake is to include score examples without clefs or reference to bar numbers or instrumentation. Sometimes no manuscript examples are included at all. In some instances, even though audio examples are included, the sound quality is very poor, or else extracts run into each other with no discernible breaks.

Many Performance Investigations lack pagination and there seems to be an increasing trend towards very flimsy or irrelevant scholarly support in the way of bibliographies. Often, the depth of research required is not being seen either within the investigations or in the supporting documentation, bibliographies, webographies and discographies. Submissions often contain flawed spelling and grammar, reflecting a lack of proof-reading.

A number of Performance Investigations dwell on matters of arrangements or orchestration, rather than focusing on the instrument played in Section A. Also, there is sometimes too much emphasis on the history of the instrument, with pages of illustrations and pictures; some include copious biographical details of composers and performers; some spend too long discussing the structure of the music being performed.

Better Performance Investigations addressed issues of tone, line, breathing, articulation and different styles/schools of performing, whereas others were restricted to dynamics and tempo, often reading in a very narrative blow-by-blow way.

However, it must be stressed that there were also a number of excellent submissions in all areas of repertoire, showing attentive listening and real insight. These were presented helpfully and were fully-documented. They took advantage of the link between the two sections of this unit.

Appendix 1 includes a detailed explanation of the six areas of the marking criteria that students need to address when writing their Performance Investigations.

Appendix 2 includes a range of exemplar material. Example 1 represents an excellent submission which fulfils all the criteria to a high level. Example 2 does not score as highly as there are omissions in areas 3 (substantiation) and 6 (documentation and bibliography). Example 3 scores modestly as there are drawbacks in all areas of the criteria.

*Report on the Units Taken in June 2006*

It is hoped that centres will find this injection of guidance useful and that it will help their students to fulfil their potential in this area.

As ever, OCR performing examiners are most grateful to centres for making them feel welcome. It is always a pleasure to make contact with the candidates and their teachers, who work so hard on their behalf.



## Appendix 1

It is recommended that centres take some time to discuss the following criteria and teach some investigative techniques before their candidates undertake their comparisons.

### 1. Aural Perception

Here the examiners will be looking for evidence that candidates *have listened carefully to the music and can pick out and compare relevant points from the recordings*.

### 2. Recognition of Significance

Examiners will be asking if candidates can discern *what is important* in each performance rather than writing a descriptive narrative of each one. Candidates should guard against repetition and should not get bogged down in detail, losing sight of the overall picture.

### 3. Substantiation of Judgements

Evidence is needed here that candidates can *pick out precise examples to support the points made*. The specification does state that examples should be both written and recorded. Candidates lose marks in this area due to:

- lack of any written or recorded examples;
- lack of **relevant** examples;
- inclusion of complete recordings only;
- badly recorded examples;
- examples that are too short; and
- examples that are not announced or linked with particular points.

### 4. Analytical/Investigative Techniques and Technical Vocabulary

Examiners will be looking for evidence of the *use of technical language pertaining to the style of music in question*. Rigorous, analytical prose is required rather than narrative description.

### 5. Contextual Understanding

Examiners want to know *how well the candidates can place the performance in context by showing awareness and understanding of appropriate performing conventions and cultural and recording conditions associated with the chosen style and instruments*. **A brief biography of each performer and the composer and a history of the instrument do not constitute contextual understanding.**

### 6. Communication of Findings and Acknowledgements

Careful checking is necessary before the final submission in order to eradicate unnecessary mistakes of spelling, grammar and syntax. Investigations presented as one long paragraph do not read easily. Candidates also need to be discerning in their use of information gleaned from web sites; some are better than others. All quotations need to be acknowledged in an appropriate fashion and a **full** bibliography of all sources, which should be of the appropriate depth, should be included.

## Appendix 2

Three examples of Performance Investigations:

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF  
TWO RECORDINGS OF GUILMANT'S  
~ ORGAN SONATA NO.4 IN D MINOR OP.61 ~



Guilmant at the console of the Salle des Fêtes du Palais du Trocadéro

### Introduction

In this investigation I shall compare two interpretations by two organists of different nationalities. I myself will play three movements of this Sonata (I, II and IV) also analysing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Movement .

Referred to as “the organ pieces Beethoven never wrote” (- Wolf Kalipp), much High Romantic influence is evident in Guilman’s Sonatas from such composers as Chopin, Liszt, Schumann and Mendelssohn. It was this embracement of pan-Romanticism that successfully forged Guilman’s distinctive style. Guilman, unlike Widor, called his symphonic works for organ “Sonatas”, as he understood the “Symphony” to be an orchestral work, much in the same way as Beethoven did with his piano Sonatas and orchestral Symphonies.

Often overshadowed by Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937) and Louis Vierne (1870-1937) as more innovative composers, Guilman is however still seen as the founding father of French Romantic organ music, having transformed French ecclesiastical music from the anarchy and irreverence of audience-pleasing music from *Opéra Comique*, popular in Paris at the time.

### The Composer

Félix Alexandre Guilman was born in 1837 into a family with a long history of organists and organ builders. He was first taught the piano and organ by his father and at 16 started as an organist at his father’s church. Shortly after, he went on to study music and through various posts he became acquainted with Aristide Cavaillé-Coll (see *The Instruments*) and the Belgian organ virtuoso Jacques-Nicolas Lemmens who taught him in 1860.

Guilman married in 1865 and embarked on an intensive recital tour of England; his wife Louise was in effect his agent, arranging all his concerts and travel.

In 1871 he took up the post at St Trinité, Paris. Performing regular concerts in France and Germany and touring America, he eventually succeeded Widor at the Paris Conservatoire where he taught until a few weeks before his death in 1911.

### The Performers

The first CD is produced by Franz Lehrndorfer, organist of the Frauenkirche at Munich (the cathedral), and is entitled *Glocken und Orgeln* (1996)– “Bells and Organs” Recordings of the cathedral bells intersperse Lehrndorfer’s performance on each of the three organs: the Guilman Sonata is played on the 4-manual main organ. The sleeve notes contain brief paragraph about each composer and the pieces themselves. The editions used are not cited.

The second recording I purchased especially for this investigation: “Guilman – Complete Organ Sonatas (1-8)” (1988) on 3 CDs by Ben van Oosten, Professor of organ at

Rotterdam Conservatory, at the redundant church of St Ouen in Rouen. This one particularly interested me, as the instrument used is a historically significant one (see above – *The Instruments*). Extensive sleeve notes in English, French and German give a detailed insight into Guilmant's life and work; a bibliography cites the edition for Sonata IV as being that of 1884, published by Durand.

The title itself sums up van Oosten's motive – to record the work and genre of a particular composer. Historical accuracy and scholarship are evidently the success of this recording. Lehrndorfer's is also in his title – to display his capabilities on different organs.

I myself use the Bärenreiter edition "Guilmant, Selected Works: Sonatas 1-4" (2001 - Editor: Wolf Kalipp).

### The Instruments

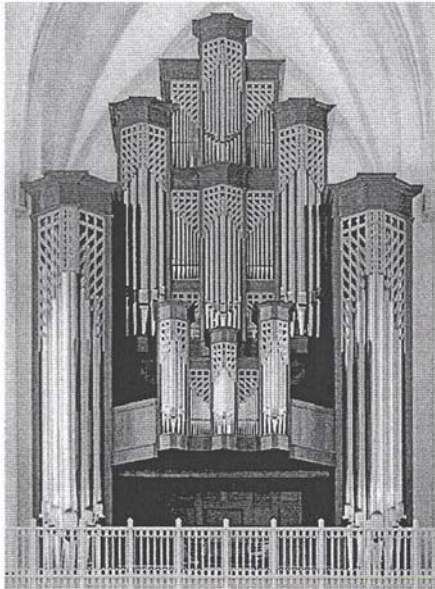
All of the four organs in the Frauenkirche were built by Georg Jann and Co., the Main organ and the Choir organ dating from 1994. Although the Main organ has an exiting sound and is a pleasure to listen to, a German friend, Stefan Ludwig, who is the organist at another church in Munich (and incidentally whom Lehrndorfer himself taught to improvise) does not rate the builder at all, an opinion probably based on Jann's work elsewhere. However, the nature and size of this organ makes it more than suitable for French Romantic music.

The organ at Rouen is by the most renowned organ builder in France of his time – Aristide Cavallé-Coll, a great friend of Guilmant's, the man who built the composer's own 3-manual house organ. Many of Cavallé-Coll's organs in and around Paris were inaugurated by Guilmant, most notably the organ at the cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris in 1868. Guilmant would thus have been very familiar with such organs, being at St Trinité and a regular performer at the Salle des Fêtes du Palais du Trocadéro, the concert hall, both sporting fine Cavallé-Coll organs.

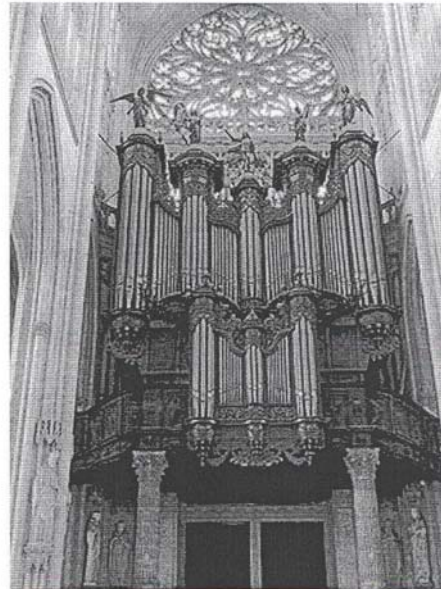
The organ on this recording, inaugurated by Widor in 1890, had originally been built in 1630 by Crespin, and much of the pipework and the whole case were retained; Cavallé-Coll pronounced the original organ to be the best in France despite its poor internal condition when asked to assess it in 1851. The finished product is said to be the most important work of its builder-cum-restorer, and furthermore, one of the finest instruments in the world. Its success is largely owed to its protection by conservative curators during the eras of eclectic rebuilds. This contrasts brilliantly with the rather more modern Munich organ.

A point worth mentioning is the position of the organs in their respective buildings; both are positioned at the back of their churches and thus speak down the space of the nave (see pictures below). However, the Rouen organ is only halfway up the back wall of the church whereas the Munich organ is at full height. This means that the space into which the Rouen

organ has to speak is not as great as that at Munich; the subsequent reverberation is not as overpowering - the echo at Munich a massive 12 seconds long. However, my suspicion is that the microphones used in Munich are closer to the organ than those at Rouen; the sound thus produced is slightly more intimate and diminishes the problem of the echo slightly.



The organ at Munich – Georg Jann and Co.



The organ at Rouen – Crespin → Cavallé-Coll

A note on the 3 main manual divisions of the organ

English	Great	Swell	Choir
French	Grand Orgue	Récit expressif	Positif
German	Hauptwerk	Schwellwerk	Positiv

The main division, the foundation of the structure of the organ.

A division usually behind/above the Great whose pipes are inside a box with shutters on the front, controllable by a swell pedal above the pedal board.

The division usually directly behind the console at the player's back – this can be seen on these two pictures as the "miniature" case below the main body. This may be in this position or in a box inside the case like the Swell.

\*This of course varies from organ to organ, country to country  
I shall refer to these divisions by their English names for clarity throughout this investigation.

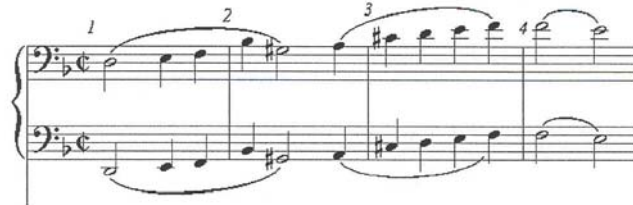
## THE PERFORMANCES

### 1<sup>st</sup> Movement

- For footnotes (marked with superscript numbers) see Appendix
- For bracketed numbers denoting tracks of excerpts see Appendix

Lehrndorfer plays this sombre, creeping ascent rather more slowly than van Oosten, both however using necessary *rubato* to shape the music effectively (1,7).

This may be a good time to mention that throughout the Sonata Lehrndorfer's articulation, quite noticeable at the start of this movement, is wholly different from van Oosten's – breaks in slurs and phrases (marked in the Bärenreiter score) being a predominant feature of his performance. This contrasts greatly with van Oosten's *legato* phrasing throughout his rendition. However, I have consulted another edition by Schott - the opening phrase e.g. is slurred thus (bars 5-8 slurred similarly):



This is how Lehrndorfer plays it (1) and other phrases marked with an “umbrella” slur in the Bärenreiter score; in the appendix of the Bärenreiter edition it is acknowledged that the slurring was altered from the above example to what it is now<sup>1</sup>. I deduce that much of the difference throughout this Sonata between Lehrndorfer's and van Oosten's articulation lies in the different editions used by each<sup>2</sup>.

Lehrndorfer reduces his registration (2) at the bridge passage at b.51 to facilitate the use of much softer registration at b.53. As marked, van Oosten leaves his registration unaltered until b.53 (8).

The 2<sup>nd</sup> subject is fairly uniform, each performer returning at b.77 to the registration used at the exposition, building this up during bars 87-95 in ways relevant to each instrument. Lehrndorfer reduces his registration again at b.103 (3) before the reoccurrence of the 2<sup>nd</sup> subject. In bars 125-128 Lehrndorfer uses the swell pedal to give a slight *crescendo* and *diminuendo* (4) to help add colour to the phrase<sup>3</sup>.

At b.133, the recapitulation ensues, both performers giving presentations similar to the exposition – the registrations are consistent and attention is given to the variations that a recapitulation brings. Lehrndorfer plays b.201 (start of the coda) on the Great rather than the Swell (5) to facilitate a change of registration – this should really happen a bar later, but it does upset the line of the previous 4 bars. He also unfortunately reads a few of the

ties in the coda as slurs, particularly across barlines, giving a strange result of articulation (6). Both performers however avoid the temptation to crescendo throughout the coda but adhere to the marking *fff* in b.221, properly highlighting the use of articulated manuals and legato pedals until the end.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement

Most notable at the beginning of this movement in particular is the actual difference in pitch of the two organs, the organ at Munich being slightly sharper (probably  $a=442$ ). Lehrndorfer starts using the articulation mentioned earlier, but this lends a great deal of expression to his performance. The legato phrasing is well adhered to by van Oosten, but the opening is rather too metronomic. Both however handle the articulation in bars 29-30 with due care, Lehrndorfer particularly well in his larger acoustic. At b.32, the temptation in such movements is to move the tempo on slightly - Lehrndorfer certainly picks up the speed here with due *rubato*. Progressing a little in this direction, van Oosten speeds up only slightly yet almost wholly without *rubato*. Lehrndorfer thus produces a far more conducive *ritenuto* for the recapitulation in 52.

Lehrndorfer gives a much more tantalising performance overall of this movement, not however as accurately as the conversely rather flat playing of van Oosten. However, there are a few discrepancies:

13 14 15 16

Played by both  
F.L. and B.v.O.

1. Both performers play a D (rather than the F printed in the Bärenreiter edition) in the left hand on the last beat of bar 14. This is a printing error on the part of Bärenreiter which I have checked against the Schott edition (13,19).

32 33 34

Played by F.L.

The following three excerpts I believe to be misreadings on Lehrndorfer's part, as they are only rhythmic variances to the Bärenreiter score; van Oosten's performance in these instances is thoroughly coordinated with the edition, the main reason why I suspect these three instances.

2. Sustained Db in the right hand instead of repetition a beat later (14).

44 45

3. No tie between G in right hand (articulated with rest of chord) (15).

4. Alteration of rhythm of left hand C to Bb, coordinating it with the rhythm of the right hand (17).

7. Alteration of rhythm of left hand C to Bb, coordinating it with the rhythm of the right hand (17).

69 70 71

Played by F.L.

The difference between the two performances is well summed up in the treatment by each of the last 7 bars (25, 23+24): accuracy at the expense of expression is van Oosten's theme, but Lehrndorfer interpretively uses the swell pedal to shape bars 74-75 at the expense of a legato pedal<sup>3</sup>, but the effect is nicely spontaneous – Lehrndorfer's overall performance of this Sonata has much of the time the necessary feel of improvisation, a result for which Guillemant himself would no doubt have striven in his organ works.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Movement

This movement comprises several repeated sections including two trios. Interestingly, it would appear that Lehrndorfer again produces the more convincing performance of this movement than van Oosten. Clearly van Oosten gives the more accurate interpretation because of his treatment of the repeated sections as important to the structure.

Lehrndorfer only repeats the first section of the first trio which is in the relative major (bars 33-40), otherwise he omits all other repeats. The performance of van Oosten's has the air of being slightly drawn out and slightly rushed. The articulation is often too legato e.g. in the first trio (27+28+29), not as directed in the Bärenreiter score where the phrase marks are clearly given (played otherwise accurately by Lehrndorfer (26)), and often not enough time is given to the ends of phrases for the acoustic of the building – often the next phrase comes too soon. Lehrndorfer however avoids this and musically shapes the



movement accordingly. After all, Guilmant's own motto was "*Toujours clair*" – always clear.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Movement

The introduction to this movement comprises an 8-bar Adagio, a very sombre start to the otherwise lively movement. Although misreading b.3 slightly (Bbs instead of B naturals) (30),

The image shows a musical score for the introduction of the 4th movement. It consists of two staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a melodic line with a slur over bars 2 and 3, and a fermata over bar 3. The bottom staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). It contains a bass line with a slur over bars 2 and 3. There are two annotations: "Played by B.v.O. + in Bärenreiter score" pointing to the top staff, and "Played by F.L." pointing to the bottom staff.

Lehrndorfer in bars 5-7 uses the swell pedal properly to lend a *crescendo* and *diminuendo* to the right hand, as required (31+32): van Oosten however does not do this (42+43), as he plays the right hand on the *Positif* (Choir) as marked; this on both organs is unenclosed\* - Lehrndorfer has played this on the Swell, also using the tremulant for added colour.

Lehrndorfer plays this entire movement much in the manner as he did with the others; interpretative articulation and registration for the acoustic is much in evidence here, but in every case thoroughly necessary to clarify his performance. The storming ascent that is first seen in b.9 is clearly marked with appropriate slurs and *staccati*, but whenever the same theme appears in the pedal, although clearly marked *legato*, the same articulation as the manuals is used (35). The distinction between these two is nonetheless made clear by van Oosten (46), even though his tempo is faster than Lehrndorfer's. This aids him in giving this movement slightly more *panache* than the other three – he is not battling with the acoustic that Lehrndorfer. The dotted rhythm at the top of the texture in bars 12-15 is an interesting discrepancy: although the 2<sup>nd</sup> beat of bar 13 is misprinted in the Bärenreiter score as being dotted, it is in fact straight quavers, congruent with the 4<sup>th</sup> beat of the bar (I have checked this against the Schott edition):

Correct version:

The image shows a musical score for bars 12-15. It consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score shows four bars of music. Bar 12 has a dotted rhythm. Bar 13 has a dotted rhythm. Bar 14 has a dotted rhythm. Bar 15 has a dotted rhythm. There are annotations for the dotted rhythm in bars 12, 13, 14, and 15.

However, Lehrndorfer adds to the confusion by playing this figure and its reoccurrences entirely dotted (33,34):



It is however played correctly by van Oosten (44,45).

At the Swell-Great manual changes (e.g. at b.37), Guilmant cleverly eliminates a possible break by having the left hand cover for the right, as can be seen below in the example on the left in the octave F. The right hand rejoins the left a dotted semiquaver later, as shown in the Bärenreiter score and in van Oosten's performance. However, Lehrndorfer seems to ignore this (36), possibly to alter his registration slightly (it is not difficult to execute) and starts b.37 entirely on the Great, thus breaking after b.36, as shown below in the example on the right. This happens at all the points at which this change occurs (including b.95) (38,49).



Lehrndorfer slows down considerably at bar 67 (37), probably owing to the registration used in the pedal, the trouble being that for such a registration to be effective with this articulation, the pedal basses need some time to sound properly. Using a different registration, van Oosten is able to avoid this impediment and keeps the tempo constant (48). The recapitulations of each performer once again are consistent with the expositions, but again the coda exposes a few differences. Lehrndorfer's pedalling is very freely articulated (40), greatly noticeable in the final 10 bars. Apart from a slip at the beginning of b.139 (50), van Oosten clearly has the upper hand in his consistently *legato* playing until the very end (51).

A most perplexing discrepancy; the question of the first chord of bar 139. In the right hand van Oosten clearly plays a C natural as shown in the stave below. Because of the nature of the staccati it is extremely difficult to discern whether he also plays a C natural in the left hand to compliment this. My suspicion is that he does, probably playing the right hand C natural in the heat and pressure of the moment of the coda. I therefore deduce that this is a genuine slip of the eye on the page and not a variance of edition – it is after all a highly unlikely and dissonant chord for that progression (50).

### Conclusion

I have said that Lehrndorfer inspired me at first to learn this Sonata and that van Oosten's was the recording purchased later; it is difficult to say whether, had I owned van Oosten's first, I would have been inspired by his interpretation. Lehrndorfer's showmanship of course was a considerable factor from the outset!

It has been interesting to hear a second opinion on this piece – neither performer, I feel, is clearly better; they are both different performers in different situations. However, I shall take everything here into account when giving my own rendition, to achieve the best possible interpretation and to do the Sonata adequate justice.

### Notes to investigation

1. The appendix also states that Guilmant's 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of his Sonata was used as the basis for this edition of Bärenreiter.
2. The edition used by van Oosten by Durand is from 1884 - the date of the Sonata's composition - this is likely to be based on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition.
3. Bars in which editorial *crescendi* and *diminuendi* (occurring together in a space of a few bars) include b. 58-61, 69-72 and 186-188 - thus it seems permissible for interpretative motions such as these to appear in performance (bars 69-72 is impossible however to execute while retaining a legato pedal part, as are bars 74-76 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> movement).
4. Guilmant however would have known the *Positif* as an enclosed division on many of the organs that he worked with.

### Bibliography

- CD Booklet "Glocken und Orgeln"
- CD Booklet "Guilmant - Complete Organ Sonatas"
- CD Booklet "The Legacy of Dupré" - another CD of the organ recorded by John Scott Whitely at Rouen which gives further details of the organ
- Introduction and Appendix to "Guilmant - Selected Organ Works - Sonatas 1-4" published by Bärenreiter, edited by Wolf Kalipp
- Another edition of the Sonata published by Schott, provided by David Sanger
- The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians - article on Guilmant by Harvey Grace/David Charlton
- All 3 pictures from Google Images

### Further information given by

- David Sanger FRCO (information about variants in Schott edition)
- Stefan Ludwig (information about Georg Jann Orgelbau)

### Comparative durations

	Lehrndorfer	van Oosten
1st Movement	5.54	4.56
2nd Movement	4.32	5.07
3rd Movement	4.05	5.34
4th Movement	6.32	5.46
<i>Total duration</i>	<i>20.23</i>	<i>20.43</i>

### Track index to excerpts

Excerpts with two track numbers e.g. 24+25 happen where two or more minidisc tracks have merged together to create one excerpt. The note "comp." Refers to a comparison with the other performer.

1st Movement	Lehrndorfer		2nd Movement	Lehrndorfer	
	Aspect(s)	Track No.		Aspect(s)	Track No.
Bars: 1-8	Articulation	1	Bars:0-2	Artic.	12
49-52	Registration	2	14	Misprint	13
101-104	Reg.	3	32-33	Misreading	14
125-128	Swelling	4	44-45	Misread.	15
197-201	Manual Change	5	50	Artic.	16
206-207	Artic.	6	70	Misread.	17
			73-76	Swelling & Artic.	N.B. 25
1st Movement	van Oosten		2nd Movement	van Oosten	
	Aspect(s)	Track No.		Aspect(s)	Track No.
Bars: 1-8	<i>comparison</i>	7	Bars:0-2	<i>comp.</i>	12
49-52	<i>comp.</i>	8	14	Misprint	13
101-104	<i>comp.</i>	9	32-33	<i>comp.</i>	14
125-128	<i>comp.</i>	10	44-45	<i>comp.</i>	15
197-201	<i>comp.</i>	11	50	<i>comp.</i>	16
206-207	<i>comp.</i>	12	70	<i>comp.</i>	17
			73-76	<i>comp.</i>	N.B. 25
3rd Movement	Aspect(s)	Track No.	Performer		
Bars: 33-40	Artic.	26	Lehrndorfer		
33-40	<i>comp.</i>	27+28+29	van Oosten		
4th Movement	Lehrndorfer		4th Movement	van Oosten	
	Aspect(s)	Track No.		Aspect(s)	Track No.
Bars: 2-3	Misread.	30	Bars: 2-3	<i>comp.</i>	41
Bars: 5-8	Swelling	31+32	Bars: 5-8	<i>comp.</i>	42+43
Bars: 12-14	Misread.	33	Bars: 12-14	<i>comp.</i>	44
18-19	Misread.	34	18-19	<i>comp.</i>	45
21-13	Artic.	35	21-13	<i>comp.</i>	46
37	Manual Change	36	37	<i>comp.</i>	47
67-69	Tempo Change	37	67-69	<i>comp.</i>	48
94-96	Manual Change	38	94-96	<i>comp.</i>	49
138-139	<i>comp.</i>	39	138-139	Unclear Chord	50
142-143	Artic.	40	142-143	<i>comp.</i>	51


### Aural Analysis

#### A comparison of two recordings of the Sonata for Flute and Piano by Francis Poulenc.

**Link: French flute music between 1880 and 1960**

**Recording one- flute Michel Debost, piano Jacques Février  
Recording two- flute Jeffery Khaner, piano Hugh Sung**

I have chosen to study this sonata because I am going to play the first and second movements. Having played Taffanel's Andantino, I became interested in how French music developed into the twentieth century. I particularly like this sonata because of the liveliness of the first movement and the contrast between this movement and the more subdued second movement. I am going to look closely at the similarities and differences between the two recordings of the first movement of Poulenc's sonata, as both interpret the music in their own way.


The opening of the movement is based in the key of E minor and the first theme  is introduced. The opening differs noticeably in the two recordings. In the first recording (Debost and Février) both the piano and flute enter gently with a dynamic level of piano, although the flute can be heard clearly above the piano. The flute does not emphasise the notes that are marked staccato, they are held for a relatively long time. In contrast, in the second recording (Khaner and Sung) both the flute and piano enter with impact. They play at a louder dynamic level (forte rather than mezzo forte) and the flute emphasises the staccato notes. The second recording is much faster than the first but I feel that this creates a rushed effect and prefer the gentler opening of the first recording. In bar 4 the way in which the flute approaches the run in the two recordings is very different. In Recording two there is a rit. between the end of bar three and beginning of bar four and the flute pauses for a short while between the tied G and the beginning of the demisemiquaver run for longer than the marked semiquaver rest. However, in recording one there is no rit. and the short semiquaver rest is observed between the tied note and run. This can be heard again in bars 12, 22, 56, 102 and 110. I think that pausing before the run prevents the music from flowing smoothly. In the first recording the crescendo is sudden and rapid whereas in the second recording the crescendo is not given as much emphasis.

On the score there is a diminuendo at the end of bar 7 followed by a marking of mezzoforte in the second half of bar 8. In recording one there is not a large diminuendo, however recording two keeps more closely to the dynamic marking and the diminuendo is more obvious. In the first recording the flute lingers on the E quaver so that there is an uneven weight on the two quavers. In recording two there is equal weight on both quavers. I feel that lingering on the E slows the pace, allowing the piano to play through more clearly in the interlude, even though the piano is louder in the second recording. In bar eighteen both recordings approach the four demisemiquavers in the flute part differently. In the first recording the flute stresses the first demisemiquaver, shortening the length of the subsequent three demisemiquavers. This is heard whenever this particular motif is played. In the second recording there is no stress on the first note and there is equal weight on the four demisemiquavers. I prefer the first recording's interpretation as it adds some character to the motif.

In much of the second recording the piano is heard clearly with the flute, it seems to be more of a duet than an accompaniment. For example in bar 29 there is a

much louder forte from the piano than in recording one where the piano sits back through the section. Also in the second recording the piano uses much more pedal. In bars 31 to 33 there are groups of four demisemiquavers followed by a semiquaver. In the first recording the flute lingers on the demisemiquavers, emphasising them, while in the second recording the flute makes the semiquavers very short and abrupt. Also in these three bars there is more of a rit. in the second recording than the first. At figure four (bar 34) there is a marking of 'léger et mordant' which translates as 'lightly with some bite'. I feel that both recordings adhere to this marking although the flute in the second recording attacks the notes with more 'bite'. The second recording gradually accelerates through to bar 40. The first recording however immediately increases in speed at bar forty, there is no gradual acceleration. There is a development of the first theme between bars 34 and 51. In bar 34 there are two accented quavers in the flute part, while in the second recording there is much accent on these quavers, in the first recording there is no obvious accent. I prefer the second recording's interpretation as it adds more interest to the theme and creates more of a contrast between the calm feel of the opening and this livelier section.

The balance between the flute and piano in both of these recordings changes at bar 45. In this section there is a return of the music heard in the section before figure four, in recording one the piano is more intrusive than previously between bar 40 and 52. At bar 52 the piano fades slightly to blend in more with the piano. In the second recording the piano is less intrusive than previously at bar 45 onwards. I feel that the change in the balance between the flute and piano in both recordings adds interest to the piece. In bar 44 there is a quaver G followed by a semiquaver C. In the first recording the flute lingers on the quaver, however in the second recording the flute places equal weight on both quavers. There are slight differences in where the emphasis is placed between the two recordings throughout the first movement. Another example is in bar 55 where the flute leans slightly on the top A semiquaver in the second recording but in the first recording the two semiquavers are given equal weight. In the first recording the flute ignores the dynamic marking of forte and plays the tied note at a quieter dynamic level than the flute in the second recording. In the piano interlude, at bars 66 to 73, the piano plays with greater use of the pedal and with a stronger and louder bass line in the first recording.

At bar 72 a second theme is introduced , which again is a contrast to the first theme of the movement. Both recordings interpret this passage differently. The first recording is much more legato than the second and in general it creates a much calmer feel. The second recording continues to play at a louder dynamic level than the first recording and the phrases are played less legato. In the first recording the flute diminuendos and fades towards the end of each phrase, for example at the end of bar 75 and a low dynamic level is played, although it is marked forte. Where it is marked 'pp subito' there is not a large drop in dynamic level. In the second recording however, the flute maintains a dynamic level of forte throughout the first phrase and in the second phrase the flute begins at a dynamic level of piano and then crescendos through the phrase. At bar ninety there is much more of a contrast between the forte and the 'pp subito', where the change in dynamic level is quite sudden. The tempo set at bar 72 also differs between the two recordings. The first recording begins bar 72 at quite a slow tempo then accelerates through to bar 80. In the second recording a fast tempo is set at bar 72 and this is maintained up until bar 80. In the first recording there is a slight rit. towards the end of bar 79 that does not occur in recording two. At figure nine (bar 80) there is another piano interlude and the second theme is echoed in the right hand of the piano, in the second recording the

piano plays at a louder dynamic level than in the first recording. This differs from the previous interlude where the piano is more forceful in the first recording, however again the piano uses more pedal in the first recording. Between bars 93 and 96 both recordings crescendo even though there is no marked crescendo, in fact it is marked fortissimo. At bar 96 the dynamic level falls in both recordings, which I feel adds contrast and character to the movement. In bar 98 there is a tempo marking of 'ceder'. Recording one adheres to this marking, slowing down dramatically and leaning on the semiquavers that follow the trill, recording two slows down but slightly less.

At the end of bar 98 there is a return of the first theme, leading into a codetta. In both recordings it is played in a similar way to the opening section. In the first recording the flute plays legato and with much vibrato, in the second recording the notes, which are marked staccato, are emphasised. Recording one does not adhere to some dynamic markings. For example at the end of bar 106 the demisemiquavers are not played forte even though it is marked, and between bars one 110 and 111 there is no crescendo. In the first recording there is a rit. leading up to bar twenty-one and the flute lingers on the top E quaver, in recording two there is no rit. In the first recording there is a large contrast between the mezzo forte of bar 125 and the forte of bar 126. There is not such a large contrast in the second recording. However in the second recording there is a large contrast between the dynamics of piano and ppp (?) in bars 129 and 130 that is not heard in the first recording. The first recording slows significantly towards the end of the movement whereas there is less of a rit. in the second recording. I prefer the ending of the first recording as it makes it seem more final and prepares the listener for the slower second movement.

Overall different aspects of the two recordings appeal to me. In places I feel the use of a lighter style, using more staccato, in the second recording is more appropriate (for example at bar 34), however in the opening I prefer the quieter and more legato playing of the first recording. These different interpretations still manage to reflect the overall bright mood of the piece, which makes it so enjoyable to listen to.



28/04/2006

Music Performance Investigation

For my performance investigation, I am going to compare two piano versions of Mozarts Piano Sonata in C k545. I chose this particular piece as it part of my recital. I learnt the piece as I heard a teacher playing it and thought it would be a good challenge to learn.

For my AS level in Music, my class and I studied Mozarts Piano Concerto in A K488 in great depth, so I feel that I have a good background of Mozarts writing for piano of his day, and enjoy playing and learning Mozart because his music is well known. The sonata that I shall be performing consists of three movements, 'Allegro', 'Andante' and 'Rondo'. As the sonata was originally written for piano, one of the recordings I am using is a piano version which was produced by a pianist called *Vladimir Ashkenazy* in 1997.

When looking at a performance of any piano music from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, you must always take into consideration the differences in the instrumental of the time and the present day modern instrument. The original Mozart piano had very few functions than modern pianos, hence a lot of his works being written without dynamics. My piano recording of the sonata by Ashkenazy on a modern piano with a lot more musical features than Mozarts piano. The performer used the range of piano functions available to show off the pianos features and tonality of the piano used.

The main piano melody of the 1<sup>st</sup> movement is played *Allegro* which makes the piece good listening. The alberti bass gives the piece a typical Mozart feel, or these similar to Mozarts style and period, it also gives it a flowing feel. Ashkenazy's version of the first movement is played somewhat quicker than that of the other performer, *Richard Urwin*, and also, Ashkenazy uses a more dynamic range. He really emphasises the phrasing and uses a lot of '*Rit*' on the typical Mozart imperfect cadence which really gives a traditional effect. Richard Urwins version of the sonata seems to be played without so much attention to detail; by this I mean, not as much dynamic range, rushed *Legato* sections, and generally just a poorer performance than Ashkenazy in my opinion. For example, in bar 18, the left hand plays a scalic passage. Ashkenazy plays this with great feeling and legato, whereas Urwin seems to rush it which, in my opinion, throws away a good opportunity to bring out the pianos functions as the piano Urwin uses is very mellow sounding.

The second movement, in my opinion, is the best movement of the piece, as it is *Andante*. I like it because there are loads of opportunities to show

off your own unique style. Both Ashkenazy and Urwin accomplish this greatly as they both seem to play in similar styles in the 2<sup>nd</sup> movement. Urwin starts off the movement very slow, then at the end of a phrase speeds up, then holds back. This gives the movement a syncopated feel which adds a lot of effect to it. In my opinion, if something is written in andante, it can start to sound a bit monotonous and boring, but both Ashkenazy and Urwin succeed in making this movement their own by making it sound more interesting by using their initiative and style. Near the middle of the piece, G major turns to G minor. This gives a happy piece of music a feeling of sadness, to be played 'Grave'. Urwin seems to play this Minor section the same as he played the Major section, whereas Ashkenazy plays it as if it a different piece all together. After the minor section, the piece returns to the major key of G, then after, modulates to C major. The C major section is played well by both performers as they both play it how it sounds like it should be played; Legato.

The third movement is the 'Rondo'. This movement is played very quick, as both the performers accomplish, but I think Ashkenazy lacks the X-factor for this. To me, it just seems as if Ashkenazy's forte is the ability to play slow and smooth songs, whereas the rondo needs emphasis-which I think Urwin does very well. Throughout a lot of the rondo movement, the right hand is playing thirds in staccato. When I play this piece, I try my best to make the staccato thirds as crisp as possible, this gives the familiar feeling of a rondo.

## Principal Examiner's Report

### Unit 2554 – Composing 2

#### General Comments

Overall, the performance of candidates was generally pleasing. There were some excellent submissions with only a few that demonstrated little evidence of any compositional skills.

Examiners were, on the whole, very impressed with the quality and standard of much of the work seen and were very grateful to the majority of centres that submitted clearly labelled work in good time for the deadline.

#### Section A: *Commissioned Assignment (Vocal Composition to a brief)*

Candidates were required to hand in a full score for a vocal composition based on one of two set texts. The second text was the most popular with approximately 60% of candidates opting for it. The choice of style for the vocal composition is at the discretion of the candidate, and a wide range of musical styles was seen, including popular, folk, jazz, neo-romantic and English church SATB. The best settings had an impressive sophistication of style showing a strong understanding of the chosen idiom. At the lower end, there were many bland ballads with poor vocal lines, a restricted harmonic and textural palette and an unwillingness to change key or vary the texture. Many examiners commented on candidates producing awkward settings, with stresses in the wrong places, cramming syllables into too few notes, and writing pointless melismas.

The vast majority of candidates relied on tonal and mainly diatonic styles of writing, with only a few exploring other compositional techniques.

#### Text 1

There were some excellent settings of both texts but, in general terms, the Sassoon poem produced the wider variety of styles. Most candidates set the text for voice and piano and were able to demonstrate familiarity with the keyboard idiom in addition to effective vocal writing. Several examiners noted that candidates were often intrigued as to how to respond to it. The level of irony in the text eluded some candidates but they were, nevertheless, able to produce excellent work of a serious intensity that was by no means inappropriate. Probably the best responses were those that took its grim humour as a cue for jazz/cabaret style answers. The war elements inspired a number of candidates to quote (often most effectively) 'patriotic' themes or even onomatopoeic evocations of battle.

The weaker submissions of the Sassoon text lacked flow, structure and variety. Melodic lines were often poorly constructed and unidiomatic and piano accompaniments demonstrated little understanding of the medium.

#### Text 2

As mentioned, 60% of candidates set the Kristin Green text, yielding a wide variety of outcomes. Many of the settings were in a pop ballad style and there were some very good ones indeed that demonstrated excellent handling of the chosen medium, strong aural awareness and accurate and precise notation and presentation.

The weaker submissions relied heavily on literal repetition and often used a limited harmonic language with little or no modulation or lacked any coherent sense of harmonic direction. Some candidates did not adhere to the specification requirements with regard to instruments/voices and a few candidates omitted the text completely from their compositions!

## **General Points:**

### **Score**

Centres are reminded that the submission of a recording without a score in this section of the unit is not acceptable, as 20% of the marks in this section are for the candidate's ability to express their intentions clearly in a written score.

The specification requires candidates to submit a score using 'standard western staff notation' and it was frustrating for examiners when a clearly excellent recording of the composition had been submitted but there was no score and consequently marks could not be awarded in this area. As last year, weaker candidates sometimes produced approximate lead sheets with the text omitted. Others provided scores in guitar tablature without any alternative staff notation and often no indication of rhythms.

Many computer-produced scores were generated and then left unedited. Word compression was a common fault leading to unclear word underlay and there were many spelling and punctuation mistakes in copying the text to the score.

### **Commentary**

Commentaries were often informative and the best ones were well-focussed, perceptive and showing clear evidence of listening to a wide range of appropriate music. Many musical examples were included and candidates demonstrated how their own compositions utilised compositional techniques seen in the examples. The weakest submissions gave a bar-by-bar description of the composition without any reference to models or background listening. Alternatively, examples were quoted that bore little or no real relationship to the composition.

**Currently, the commentary is a specification requirement but is not assessed as such. However, centres are reminded that it will be assessed with effect from the May 2007 examination.**

### **Recording**

It is important that the compositional process is related directly to the concept of musical performance and, in some cases, candidates had gone to great lengths to produce a 'real' recording of their work. Most of the recordings were, however, computer-generated with an instrumental realisation of the vocal part(s).

Although a recording is not currently a specification requirement, many candidates did submit their work on CD or cassette and this was most helpful. The recording was not assessed but if candidates submitted a recording it could only help them. It was noted that a number of candidates submitted CDs that did not play on a normal hi-fi system and that it is particularly important to check recordings on such equipment before dispatching them to examiners. Also, centres should note that mini/floppy disks are not acceptable for this unit.

**Currently, a recording is not a specification requirement. However, centres are reminded that it will become a specification requirement with effect from the May 2007 examination, and must be submitted only in either CD or cassette format.**

## **Section B: Stylistic Techniques or Film Storyboard**

Approximately 74% of candidates submitted stylistic exercises and 26% the film storyboard. Of the six stylistic techniques options, 62% chose Bach chorales, 15% 18<sup>th</sup> Century Two-part, 11% Early Romantic Keyboard Accompaniments, 10% Classical String Quartets, 1.5% 20<sup>th</sup> Century Music Theatre and 0.5% the late 16<sup>th</sup> Century Two-part option.

Examiners felt that, in general terms, the overall performance was slightly better than last year and that most candidates had assimilated something of their chosen style and were capable of working convincingly within the parameters of that style. It was noted that there was, again, a continuing improvement in the suitability of exercises provided for candidates to work with.

Centres are reminded that each portfolio is marked as a whole and candidates are asked to date their exercises and submit them in chronological order. Again, it was noted that some centres submitted portfolios in which the candidates' work was indistinguishable from the given material and it was therefore difficult for examiners to assess the candidates' original work.

It should be noted that the specification asks for between 8 and 10 exercises of roughly 16 to 24 bars in length; the submissions of some candidates did not meet these requirements. It is, however, important to note that a large number of Bach Chorales are less than 16 bars in length but the harmonic change rate is considerably faster than in the other stylistic options. Consequently, portfolios containing some slightly shorter exercises for this option are acceptable. It is, of course, perfectly acceptable for candidates to submit work of slightly fewer than 16 bars in the other stylistic options so long as this is compensated for by other exercises in the portfolio being more than 16 bars, so that the total submission is not in anyway lightweight.

### **Stylistic Techniques:**

#### **Two-part Counterpoint of the Late 16<sup>th</sup> Century**

Only a small number of candidates chose this option and the portfolios submitted were of a high standard.

#### **Two-part Baroque Keyboard Counterpoint**

It was pleasing to see a greater variety in the types of two-part textures submitted again this year. There were many very good examples where it was clear that candidates understood the harmonic implications of the given part, used appropriate chords and handled the modulations with confidence. Suspensions, together with idiomatic resolutions and stylistic cadential clichés, were also seen in many submissions. In the weaker submissions, poor attention was given either to harmonic or melodic direction and implied modulations were missed.

Centres are again reminded that, at this level, it is not appropriate to provide candidates with figured basses because it deprives them of the opportunity of making harmonic decisions for themselves and prevents Examiners from ascertaining exactly what the candidates are capable of doing.

It must be emphasised that a careful selection of excerpts is of critical importance if the candidates are to have the best possible opportunity of showing what they are capable of doing over a range of textures. Truly imitative textures were conspicuous by their absence.

### **Chorale treatments in the style of Bach**

This was, by far, the most popular option. There were some excellent portfolios showing a strong command of the harmonic vocabulary, good voice-leading and mastery of the principles of modulation.

Weaker submissions, like last year, contained many grammatical errors such as parallel 5ths & 8ths, a lack of understanding of the harmonic implications inherent in the chorale melody, little understanding of modulation and the use of cadences rare in the style (i.e. plagal and interrupted).

The most common problems were low tenor lines, poor spacing, a lack of passing notes, fewer than eight chorales in the portfolio, chorales not being of sufficient length, no chorales submitted in minor keys and chorales selected that only enabled candidates to demonstrate a knowledge of 'simple harmonic vocabulary' and a 'limited range of common textures', which did, of course, mean that such candidates were unable to access the highest mark band. To cover a wide range within this style it is important to include chorales that demonstrate a range of textures and types in both major and minor keys.

Several examiners mentioned the fact that some candidates had been given the chorale melody without any section being complete in all parts. It is impossible for candidates to ascertain the type of texture that Bach is going to use in a particular chorale without being provided with a suitable incipit and centres are urged to always provide such material in order to help the candidate.

### **Classical String Quartets**

Although only 10% of candidates opted for this, there were some very good portfolios submitted, showing understanding of classical textures and appropriate accompaniment patterns. Cadences were often idiomatic and a general strong awareness of style was in evidence.

Some centres gave candidates exclusively minuets that erred on the side of simplicity, thus restricting the opportunities for the candidates to demonstrate their skills over a range of appropriate textures. To cover a range of types within this style it is important to include examples that give candidates the opportunity of showing that they can handle a fast movement, a slow movement and a minuet and trio movement. They could encompass triple metre, quadruple metre, compound time, imitation between instruments and chromaticism.

### **Early Romantic Keyboard Accompaniments**

Approximately 11% of candidates chose this option and there were some pleasing portfolios. Most candidates submitted workings exclusively of lieder again this year. It was good to see that an increasing number of students seemed to be handling more sophisticated chromatic chords and distant modulations most successfully. Weaker submissions adhered to simple harmonic vocabulary, with no use of appropriate chromatic chords at obvious places and little attempt to continue in the style of the given material. In some cases candidates were furnished with especially difficult examples, which, unfortunately, resulted in lower marks than needed to have been the case had they have been provided with more accessible material.

### **Twentieth-Century Musical Theatre**

Very few candidates opted for this style this year (1.5%), but there were some good portfolios in which a clear familiarity with the styles and a good sense of flow was in evidence.

Examples came from a wide range of styles with some extremely imaginative continuations, where it was obvious that the candidate had a good understanding of textures presented.

## **Film Storyboard**

It was most encouraging to note that slightly more candidates (26%) chose this option this year. The storyboard seemed to inspire candidates and there were some excellent submissions, with strong themes, good structures, a sense of drama and imaginative scoring. Some candidates made use of wordless choral writing and the accordion was a very popular choice of instrument. In general there was a strong command of compositional techniques, excellent use of contrast and continuity and idiomatic and inventive use of the chosen instruments very much in evidence.

Examiners noted that the storm proved to be the weakest part for many otherwise good scores. Often it didn't seem to happen at all or there was a string of clichés (long timpani rolls, fast chromatic scales etc).

Most candidates coped well with designing their compositions around the given timings but some submissions seemed to bear little relationship to them. Most recordings had been produced using a computer sequencer and only a few candidates submitted 'live' recordings using real instruments. Some candidates manipulated their compositions to fit the given timings using technology; with outcomes that were not always musical (e.g. meaningless accelerandos/rits/general pauses etc).

Film storyboard submissions must contain a recording, together with either a full score or a full commentary on the methods of producing/mixing the master recording. Candidates can choose either the score or the recording as the principal examination document and alternative assessment criteria are provided for these two options. It is essential that candidates make it clear whether they want the score or the recording to be assessed.

It was noted that a number of candidates submitted computer-generated CDs that did not play in a normal hi-fi system. **It is particularly important to remember to check recordings in a hi-fi system before dispatching them to examiners and to remember that mini/floppy disks are not acceptable recording formats for this unit.**

Very few candidates chose to have the recording assessed. Many of those who did, whilst submitting a commentary, did not focus on the methods of producing/mixing the master recording but instead gave a running commentary on their actual music, which was not what was required.

Again this year, the majority of candidates submitted their score as the principal examination document. Centres are reminded to inform candidates that it should be made clear on the score how the timings match up with their music. This is particularly important where the timings on the accompanying recording are not totally accurate. The best candidates incorporated not only details of the timings on their scores but also an appropriate sentence from the storyboard itself. This is highly commendable, and helpful to examiners.

The scores were generally good and were an improvement on last year. Main errors were meaningless phrase marks, unnecessary rests, notes enharmonically incorrect, a lack of slurs, and, as ever, some enormous scores with only two bars per page. Formatting is an important part of creating the final copy and just changing the staff size and hiding empty bars would be a big improvement.

In this option, Examiners were looking for creativity and the ability to obtain a balance between writing to given timings/dramatic situations and producing a satisfying musical structure. The storyboard is designed to encourage candidates to compose their pieces with

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an overall musical structure in mind. The best candidates produced musical motifs that they associated with the different characters and situations and combined and developed their material as appropriate.

Some wonderfully imaginative work was seen in this option and many candidates received very high marks for their work.

### **Changes to the Specification**

Centres are reminded of the changes in specification for 2007:

- A 'free composition' option is introduced
- Candidates must choose one of the two OCR Commissioned Assignments (**either** the text setting **or** the Film storyboard)
- Recordings (in CD or cassette format) are mandatory for both Commissioned Assignments and the 'free composition' option

**The 2007 specification can be down loaded from the OCR website: [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)**



## Principal Examiner's Report

### Unit 2555: Historical and Analytical Studies

Examiners were pleased to note an improved performance this year with more candidates achieving marks in the higher range. They were impressed with the work of many candidates who showed remarkable aural skills and who were able to give answers that showed a real understanding of their chosen topic and of repertoire. The performance of many candidates however was disappointing, with a failure to give direct and relevant answers being a common shortcoming. A further cause for concern this year was the poor understanding of tonality; whilst candidates are generally confident and successful in answering questions concerning the relationship between Words and Music, many show a poor grasp of this other Area of Study.

There was an increase this year in the tendency for candidates to write too much in their extended answers in Section A. These long answers, which often wandered from the point, were written in any available space in the booklet and sometimes continued on extra sheets. Clearly much valuable time was wasted on these answers.

**Teachers' Tip.** Candidates will benefit from looking at previous papers and discussing what questions are asking and what is required in answer. They should understand that the available space for each answer is carefully considered and gives an indication of the length of answer needed, as does the number of marks available. Answers in note form and bullet points are perfectly acceptable in Section A and this style of response may help with candidates' time management.

#### Section A

Q.1 (i) Many candidates wrote too much here, giving more detail than the required 'overall structure' and 'main sections'. The majority was misled also by the five stanzas of text and translated these into five musical verses. The musical evidence was clearly of a much simpler structure than many candidates described.

**Teachers' Tip.** Candidates should be encouraged to read carefully the instructions for each question. In this case it was clearly stated twice that this Extract was *a verse*. They should also understand that this opening question is designed to make them listen to the whole extract and to understand its overall structure, before continuing to consider in more detail its use of tonality and the relationship between text and music.

Q 1 (ii) This was generally well answered by most candidates, with the use of doubling, sometimes displaced by an octave, and of independent writing for the piano being observed. A very large number of candidates referred to the doubling as *imitation*, a term which of course has an entirely different musical meaning. Centres are reminded that the specification requires at this level that candidates use appropriate technical language.

Q 2 This was successfully answered by most, though many answers were longer than the space or the single mark required. A single word answer was sufficient.

Q3 It was good to find correct answers to this dictation and many others that lacked only accidentals. However, the majority of candidates gained only one or two marks here for correct rhythm and some melodic contour.

Q4 This was generally disappointing. Far too many candidates believe that the only alternative to tonal music is atonality or dissonance. They did not need to identify the scale used by Poulenc as the Phrygian mode, or to describe it as typically Spanish, though many did both. The aural evidence should have led candidates to this scale, used throughout much of the extract and by the singer, in its complete descending form in bars 34 to 37. A description of this scale would have earned credit. Most candidates correctly gave the tonic as D major. A good number referred to *modal influences*.

Q5 (i) and (ii) Most candidates did very well here, showing a good understanding of how Poulenc's writing and this performance both reflect the meaning and mood of the text.

Q6 The majority of candidates gained one mark here for observing either the acciaccatura in the voice part or the piano's playful descending semiquaver figure. A pleasing number identified both features.

Q7 This too was generally well answered, though many who observed this performer's final high note were unable to name it correctly. Strangely, many failed to note its being held for five bars.

Q8 Considering that this is a question that usually appears, giving candidates an opportunity to discuss a work that they have listened to in their preparation, it was not well answered by many this year. A good number were unable to make a comparison with any other work. Some referred to another composer's general style but failed to mention a work. A few candidates made comparisons with the performing styles of another singer. Some offered no answer at all.

However, it was clear that for the great majority of candidates the song was a fruitful extract. Answers generally showed a real ability to analyse and an appreciation of the musical features and performing techniques used in this text setting.

## Extract 2

The questions here were generally well attempted with many candidates gaining good marks. The more open style of questions proved successful with candidates showing the ability to seek out answers from their listening. The grid was clearly very useful as a visual point of contact to assist listening and many candidates used this to make notes as they listened, before writing them up in the spaces provided.

Nearly all candidates gained at least three marks in Q 9 and Q 10 received full and perceptive answers from very many candidates. The descending sequence and the following two octave scale were identified by most for Q 11, though many candidates lost marks through vague and wordy descriptions of these features.

## **Section B**

Answers here achieved a very wide range of marks. At best there were some really fine answers that were a pleasure to read; they were knowledgeable, perceptive, well argued, and well supported with close references to repertoire.

Less successful answers suffered from being superficial or even irrelevant or they failed to answer the question as set. Many contained long, rambling passages with few references to musical illustrations, showing little ability to present a structured answer. Centres are reminded that OCR is required to assess the quality of written communication in this section.

## *Report on the Units Taken in June 2006*

In general Topics 1 and 2, though attracting relatively few answers, were well done. Candidates were able to show an understanding of the subject and had clearly engaged with the supporting repertoire.

Q 12 was often very well done, though some candidates gave rather woolly accounts of Palestrina's style.

Q 13 also produced some excellent answers and many others that could be summarised as 'good/general'.

Despite the open nature of Q 14, very few candidates accepted the invitation to discuss the text setting of a composer of their own choice.

Q 16 was generally poorly attempted, with many having a poor knowledge of tuning and an even poorer awareness of the developments in tonality in the period.

Q 17 however was usually well attempted, with candidates able to refer to a good range of works other than Messiah in support of their observations.

In Topic 3 the most popular questions were 19 and 20.

In Q 19 candidates were able to discuss in some detail the features of orchestral and piano works and were able to give some indication of the development of tonality in the period. Examiners were prepared to accept discussions of Lied or opera in so far as they referred to the use of harmony and tonality in the instrumental writing. Indeed some answers that did this were very successful.

Q 20 also produced some very creditable answers, with candidates giving full accounts of two or more composers and making close reference to details of the music.

In Topic 4 examiners were pleased to note fewer candidates whose knowledge was restricted to West Side Story.

Answers to Q 21 made reference to a pleasing range of musicals or films. Those who referred to West Side Story often gave very full and successful answers, though some barely went beyond accounts of the use of the tritone.

Q 22 produced some really impressive answers, with candidates able to make detailed references to the War Requiem, Curlew River, Jesus Christ Superstar and several other works. Far too many candidates showed a very loose interpretation of 'belief', giving accounts of music, usually West Side Story, which created a convincing dramatic effect for the audience to believe, or 'showed Tony's belief that something's coming'.

Q 23 was another open question giving candidates the freedom to choose from works studied. Very few answers were received.

### **Section C**

Overall, the standard of answers here was improved on previous years, with many candidates showing a confidence and an ability to draw widely on musical knowledge and experience.

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Q 24 was popular, with candidates able to give good and detailed accounts of the Twentieth Century. The developments in earlier centuries were less well covered, though some accounts of social changes in the early Nineteenth Century were impressive. Those who chose to discuss the Twenty-first Century found little to discuss beyond internet downloads and pod casting.

Q 25 was also popular, attracting good answers on the Beatles, for instance, and on the influence of the Far East on Debussy or Britten. Some candidates chose to discuss with much success the influence of, for instance, folk culture or the Italian culture.

Answers to Q 26 produced a very wide range of marks. At best, candidates were able to refer to a range of musical influences in some detail. Less successful answers contained little more than references to composers and works that had been enjoyed, with no substantial account of musical features in them or explanation of how these features had been of influence.

Q 27 was often very well done, though there were candidates who duplicated material from Q 20 in Section B.

Q 28 too produced mainly good or very good answers. Many candidates referred to the popularity of piano pieces and parlour songs in the nineteenth century and the music that catered for this amateur music making. Others discussed with some success the effect of technology on amateur composers and performers today and of the opportunities the internet gives to these amateur musicians to promote their music.

The listening extracts were clearly successful and appear to have been enjoyed; a few candidates wrote a brief note of thanks at the end of Section A! The failure by some candidates to answer the question is still a worry, as is the standard of essay writing. More worrying is the failure by so many candidates to show any real understanding of tonality and its use in text setting and in musical structure.

On the other hand, the range of knowledge and of repertoire is improved this year. Many candidates are clearly being very well prepared and are able to give impressive answers that show real ability and understanding.

**Advanced GCE Music 3872/7872  
June 2006 Assessment Series**

**Unit Threshold Marks**

Unit		Maximum Mark	a	b	c	d	e	u
2550	Raw	100	81	72	63	54	45	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
2551	Raw	100	80	71	63	55	47	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
2552	Raw	100	65	58	51	45	39	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
2553	Raw	100	78	70	62	55	48	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
2554	Raw	100	76	68	61	54	47	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
2555	Raw	100	69	63	57	51	45	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0

**Specification Aggregation Results**

Overall threshold marks in UMS (i.e. after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
<b>3872</b>	300	240	210	180	150	120	0
<b>7872</b>	600	480	420	360	300	240	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
<b>3872</b>	21.95	41.76	61.43	79.74	92.64	100	1535
<b>7872</b>	22.24	45.74	69.16	87.15	96.53	100	1268

**2803 candidates aggregated this series**

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;  
[www.ocr.org.uk/OCR/WebSite/docroot/understand/ums.jsp](http://www.ocr.org.uk/OCR/WebSite/docroot/understand/ums.jsp)

Statistics are correct at the time of publication









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