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Examiners' Report
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GCE Music 8MU0 03

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Introduction

This paper tests the skills of musical analysis and evaluation.

Students needed to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of musical elements, contexts and language, in relation to the music they have studied and to unfamiliar music, for each of the areas of study. They needed to analyse and evaluate music in written and aural form, in order to make critical judgements about its musical elements, context and language, within the scope of the area of study.

In terms of assessment, Section A of the paper comprised Questions 1-4 and was worth 45 marks. The three listening questions (Question 1(Q), Q2 and Q3) were based on extracts from set works in three of the areas of study and Q4 consisted of two dictation questions, including pitch and rhythm dictation and a 'spotting the errors' question. A skeleton score was provided for Q1-3. Section B comprised an essay question based on a piece of unfamiliar music worth 15 marks, and an essay question (from a choice of three based on set works from three areas of study) worth 20 marks.

In the listening questions, examiners were looking for good aural skills applied to the music of the extracts. This included knowledge of chords, keys and intervals, as well as the use of common musical devices, such as pedal, ostinato and ornamentation.

Q5 tested the ability of students to relate their learning to another piece in a similar style or genre to one of the set works. Unfamiliar pieces of music are those that are neither set works nor suggested wider listening in the specification. Unfamiliar music will have similar stylistic characteristics to the set works. No skeleton score was provided for Q5. Students were expected to formulate critical judgements on both familiar and unfamiliar music. Q6 asked students to evaluate music with reference to musical elements such as melody, harmony and sonority. No audio was provided for this question but an illustrative excerpt of several pages of the score was provided, although students were expected to use their knowledge of the set work as a whole in their answer.

Many students performed well in Section B of the paper and it was impressive to see how much musical detail had been learnt by the most able students. This included appropriate references to relevant examples of wider listening. The quality of written communication tended to be quite good with essays being well-structured. The main problem with the Q6 essay question was that some students did not answer the question posed. If asked about melody and harmony, as in the Vivaldi question, then any comments relating to tonality, texture or structure might well have been correct but were irrelevant. It was clear that, at times, some students simply wrote down everything they had learnt about the pieces, with little or only scant regard for the specifics of the question.

Many students approached this new paper with confidence and it was pleasing to find some very high marks.

Question 1 (b)

This question required students to describe the vocal melody, therefore references to texture or instrumentation were not creditworthy.

Most students identified correctly that the melody was scalar or conjunct. Whilst some students also described the melody as 'ascending and descending', their description was not accurate enough to gain marks. Less frequent answers were 'repeated rhythm' and 'tied notes'. Some students recognised the chorale melody but did not describe it as 'decorated'. 'Melismatic' was not a creditworthy response to this question.

Most students gained two marks for this question, with many full-mark answers.

(b) Describe the vocal melody in bars 1 to 2.

(3)

It is ~~diatonic~~ ~~conjunct~~ conjunct. ~~The~~
~~first~~ descends and then ascends.
It is ascending and the 1st part is diatonic and
the second part includes a chromatic note.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This response gains one mark for 'conjunct'. 'It is ascending' is too vague: the melody starts by descending, then ascends, then descends at the end. 1 mark

There were many full-mark responses, such as this one.

(b) Describe the vocal melody in bars 1 to 2.

(3)

The melody is melismatic as it has more than one note
per syllable. The melody is conjunct. It descends and
then ascends. It establishes the key by repeating the tonic.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The first part of this answer – 'The melody is melismatic' – is not creditworthy. However, the student then states correctly that the melody is conjunct, followed by an accurate description (descending then ascending) of the melodic movement. 3 marks

(b) Describe the vocal melody in bars 1 to 2.

(3)

The beginning melody is quite scalar. Relatively low tessitura. Limited range.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a two-mark response: 'scalar' and 'limited range'.
2 marks

Question 1 (c) (i)

Students often recognised that the interval was a fourth or a fifth but frequently put them the wrong way around, writing fifth for this question and fourth for 1(c)(ii).

Students are reminded that they should describe the quality of the interval, as well as its numerical value eg perfect fourth.

Question 1 (c) (ii)

Question 1 (d)

Most students identified the key correctly as G major, possibly assisted by the inclusion of a C natural in the skeleton score in bar 10.

In modulation questions students should look for clues in the skeleton score, such as accidentals, as well as listening for the key change.

Question 1 (e)

There were many incorrect responses to this question: students identified the organ as being one of the instruments playing in the extract but did not notice that the instrument required in the question was an instrument that enters at bar 12.

Question 1 (f)

Most students described the texture of this section correctly as polyphonic or contrapuntal, and many also used the word 'fugal' in their response. More informed answers had a good understanding of fugal textures, and identified subject and answer.

(f) Describe the texture from bar 16 beat 3 to the end of the excerpt.

(3)

The texture is layered with vocal parts singing similar melodies but entering at different times. Its contrapuntal and perhaps polyphonic.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

'Melismatic' is not a description of texture.

The words 'contrapuntal', 'polyphonic' and 'layered' are interchangeable in the mark scheme, therefore this response only gains one mark.

1 mark

(f) Describe the texture from bar 16 beat 3 to the end of the excerpt.

(3)

The sopranos enter first with the subject, and the texture then builds up one part at a time, becoming more fugal + polyphonic.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a full answer: creditworthy points are 'subject', 'fugal' and 'polyphonic'.

3 marks

(f) Describe the texture from bar 16 beat 3 to the end of the excerpt.

(3)

A fugal texture. The Sopranos begin with the subject and
Alto's Singing the counter-subject. The Bass sings the subject again.
It creates a contrapuntal texture.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a three-mark response:

- fugal texture
- soprano begins with the subject
- contrapuntal texture

3 marks

Question 2 (a)

This was a straightforward question looking for a technical term: pedal or drone. The mark scheme also allowed open fifth.

2 Debussy: *Estampes* No.1 'Pagodes'

Listen to Track 2 of the CD and refer to Excerpt 2 in the resource booklet.

(a) Name the harmonic device heard in the bass in bars 1 to 10.

(1)

Pedal note



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This question requires students to know what a harmonic device is and also to be able to hear it, or remember it, from having studied this set work. Most students answered 'pedal note', as in this response.

1 mark

Question 2 (b)

Question 2 (c)

Question 2 (d)

This proved to be a challenging question for many students, although triplets and different rhythms were often identified correctly.

However, some candidates described the pitch as being higher, rather than an octave higher. Other vague answers that were not creditworthy were 'more than one note played at once', rather than the specific 'octaves', which was required.

(d) State **two** ways in which the right hand melody in bar 11 differs from that in bar 3. (2)

- 1 Different rhythm (bar 11 has ~~triplets~~ more triplets)
- 2 The melody is an octave higher in bar 11.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This response gains the two marks available for this question, although there are three correct points made:

- triplets
- octaves
- different rhythm

2 marks

(d) State **two** ways in which the right hand melody in bar 11 differs from that in bar 3. (2)

- 1 It is an octave higher
- 2 Repeated quavers



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a one-mark response for 'an octave higher'.

1 mark

Question 2 (e)

Question 2 (f)

Most students identified 'triplets and quavers' correctly as a rhythmic point, and 'contrapuntal' as a texture point. 'Cross rhythms' (sic) or 'triplets against quavers' were also popular responses.

Many students described the texture incorrectly as two-part, rather than three-part, because they did not include the bass pedal note.

(f) Describe the rhythm and texture heard in bars 23 to 26.

(3)

There is a contrapuntal texture
The left hand plays quavers, whereas the right hand plays triplets which create polyrhythms.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is a three-mark response:

- contrapuntal
- quavers and triplets
- polyrhythms

3 marks

(f) Describe the rhythm and texture heard in bars 23 to 26.

(3)

The Rhythm ~~is in~~ ^{is in} 4/4 ~~beat~~ with syncopation
The texture changes to 3 part contrapuntal texture
with a Bass pedalling, melody and treble off with patterns.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is also a three-mark response:

- three parts
- contrapuntal
- pedal note

3 marks

Question 2 (g)

Most students identified pedal notes correctly and the pentatonic scale as being reminiscent of Gamelan music.

Less-frequent answers referred to changes of harmony and added-note harmonies. Even more rare were longer note-values at lower pitches and shorter note-values at higher pitches.

Some students confused this Debussy piece with the other one, and identified Habanera rhythms as being influenced by Gamelan.

(g) Explain how the influence of Javanese gamelan is heard in this excerpt.

(3)

The use of the pentatonic and whole tone scale, from Japan, and repeated rhythms / tonic pedal at start from gamelan (Gang at start) & parallel chords (gamelan).



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is an excellent three-mark response:

- pentatonic
- repeated rhythms
- tonic pedal

3 marks

Question 3 (a)

Nearly all students identified the opening section correctly, as the introduction.

Question 3 (b)

This question was answered well by most students. Incorrect answers were usually 'blue note' or 'major key'.

Question 3 (c)

This question was answered well.

Question 3 (d)

Students found this question difficult. A frequent misconception was that the melody was higher, or that it had a wider range when, in fact, it had a narrower range, because the phrase in bars 5 to 7 reached a low G.

The most usual, correct response, was 'different rhythm'.

References to lyrics were not credited because the question asked for differences in the melody.

(d) State **two** ways in which the vocal melody of bars 9 to 11 differs from the vocal melody of bars 5 to 7.

(2)

1 its harmonised by another instrument

2



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response is not creditworthy because it refers to instrumentation, rather than to the vocal melody.

0 marks

(d) State **two** ways in which the vocal melody of bars 9 to 11 differs from the vocal melody of bars 5 to 7.

- (minor 3rd) (2)
- 1 More leaps and blue notes, more syncopation
 - 2 Riff at the end



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The student identifies the minor 3rd leap correctly but does not gain a mark for that observation, due to stating that there are more leaps, which is not true.

One mark is awarded for syncopation.

1 mark



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Always read the stem of the question carefully in comparison questions: here, the emphasis is on what is different in bars 9-11

Question 3 (e) (i)

Question 3 (e) (ii)

This question was usually answered well, the most frequent responses being: 'ascends then descends', 'fill', 'improvised' and 'quavers'.

(ii) Describe the music played by this instrument.

(2)

Fills played in between vocal phrases, using blue notes. Saxophone also plays an extended solo.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a two-mark response for 'fills' and 'blue notes'.

2 marks

(ii) Describe the music played by this instrument.

(2)

improvised using blues scales / notes



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a two-mark response for 'improvised' and 'blue notes'.

2 marks

(ii) Describe the music played by this instrument.

(2)

it is in parallel 3rds, it is ~~a~~ ~~sewing~~, it is rising and falling in pitch between vocal phrases.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is a one-mark response for 'rising and falling'.

1 mark

(ii) Describe the music played by this instrument.

(2)

Rising triadic quaver ~~are~~ ~~as~~ between vocal parts and the bass part in solo



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This response gains credit for 'triadic' and 'quaver' which are the two points needed for a two-mark question.

'Rising' does not gain credit because it is a partial answer: the fill rises and falls.

2 marks

Question 3 (f)

This question was not answered well.

Many students recognised the second and third chords but fewer recognised the first chord, which was located in bar 13.

Question 4 (a)

There were many full-mark responses here. Generally, rhythm was attempted more successfully than pitch.

The perfect fourth at the end of the second bar proved challenging for some students. Many students were unfamiliar with the conventions regarding grouping of notes and joined the five quavers in the second bar together, with one beam.

4 Listen to Track 4 of the CD.

(a) Complete the melody in bars 2 to 3.

(6)



Listen to Track 5 of the CD.

The written music given below contains **three** errors.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Although this response contains one error at the end (the last note should be B), it is still awarded full marks due to it being within the tolerance boundary for six marks (16-18 correct pitches and rhythms).
6 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Do not spend a lot of time listening to the dictation questions multiple times, at the expense of leaving time for the essays: there are 9 marks for dictation and 35 for essays.

Question 4 (b)

This question proved to be challenging for many candidates. Here again, the rhythmic error was more often identified correctly than the B flats in the pitch errors.

Students are reminded that accidentals should be placed at the left-hand side of the note. Students should note that a rhythmic error necessarily affects two notes but is classed as one error/change, and therefore, one mark.

(b) Identify the errors by writing a correct version of the melody on the staff below.

(3)



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a full-mark response, neatly notated.

3 marks

Question 5

This was a new style of question. It required students to draw on their knowledge and understanding of a particular genre and make observations regarding features heard in unfamiliar music. Students had to relate the features to the genre and justify their points with examples from other relevant works.

There were some excellent essays offered in response to this question, showing that students had a thorough understanding of 19th-century chamber music, with some students identifying the composer correctly, as Brahms.

Where essays were placed into the Level 1 or Level 2 bands, it was usually because observations were not linked to the genre and/or pieces of wider listening were not used to support points made. In some essays, there was an over-reliance on set works to illustrate points made, particularly the Clara Schumann Trio.

Make sure observations are linked to the genre being discussed, preferably giving a specific example from another piece of music.

This essay would have been awarded a mark within the top Level 4 category if it had included more, wider listening, links.

The term 'unison' is often used incorrectly to mean instruments playing homorhythmically; similarly, the term is also used to mean 'playing in octaves'. For example: the violin and cello were playing in unison.

SECTION B

Write your answers in the spaces provided.

5 INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Listen to Track 6 of the CD.

Discuss how this piece is characteristic of 19th century chamber music, giving musical reasons for your answer.

Relate your discussion to other relevant works. These may include set works, wider listening or other music.

(15)

This piece is characteristic of 19th century chamber music as it is performed with a piano, violin and cello - all with equal roles, much like Clara Schumann's Piano Trio in G minor 1st Mvt. There is also doubling occurring mainly with the violin and cello, creating numerous textures, though mainly the texture is melody-dominated homophony, as is typical of 19th century pieces as they moved away from the contrapuntal textures of Baroque music, using instead the texture popular in Classical music. However, there is one example of

~~homophony~~ unison which is used to add large amounts of power and importance to a melody, which is characteristic of 19th Century chamber music as the melody is the most important feature. The melody reaches a fairly large range, making the playing of the violin, cello and piano players very impressive, almost virtuosic, ~~with~~ the use of double stopping and pizzicato in the violin and cello parts. This is characteristic of 19th Century Chamber music as it would be performed in a rich person's house (hence the relatively small performance form), therefore this music was designed to impress the small audience. This relatively advanced, almost virtuosic playing is similar to that of Clara Schumann's Piano Trio in G minor. Like 'Piano Trio in G' this piece also features some limited chromaticism as the romantic music performed in the 19th Century began to break away from the strictly diatonic harmony of the classical and Baroque ~~eras~~ eras. There is also some dissonance heard in the form of a minor 9th between the violin and piano. This is characteristic of 19th Century chamber music as, although this piece still features a ~~mostly~~ mostly diatonic, functional harmony with many perfect cadences, it contains some chromaticism.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a Level 3 essay with correct observations being made by the student, such as:

- identifying the instruments correctly and the fact that they have equal roles within the ensemble, with a link to Clara Schumann's piano trio in G minor
- melody-dominated homophony is a feature of 19th-century chamber music
- the instruments' range is exploited
- virtuosic (this was linked to the Clara Schumann composition, which is not really a virtuosic piece)
- double stopping and pizzicato
- chromatic harmony

11 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Make sure your links to wider listening pieces are relevant

Question 6 (a)

The Vivaldi essay was the second most popular choice of essay.

Students generally were confident in naming melodic features such as sequence, arpeggio-based melodies and scale-based melodies but were less sure about harmonic features. Knowledge of different types of suspension and figured bass indications was scant.

It is important that students refer only to relevant features in the work, according to what the question is asking. For example, many essays spent a lot of time describing fugal and other textures in detail. There was confusion by some students who mistook harmony for key, and described the modulations that occur in the various movements.

Frequently, students used wider listening in a negative way: for example, 'In Vivaldi's concerto there are conjunct melodies whereas in Schoenberg's Peripetie there are disjunct melodies'.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

If you answer part (a) put a cross in the box .

If you answer part (b) put a cross in the box .

If you answer part (c) put a cross in the box .

Vivaldi is one of the key composers of the late Baroque period, and as such his use of melody and harmony is often what characterises our view of the music of the time.

The piece begins with a tonic pedal, shared between the concertino violins. Pedal notes can be seen all through the Baroque era, for example in Bach's cantata 'Ein Feste Berg', and were often used to ground the harmony. The melody here begins triadic but eventually becomes ~~so~~ scalar. By the time the cello enters, the melody is now littered with sequences (descending then ascending), a common feature of Vivaldi's music (for example

'Spring'). The harmony here is based on the circle of fifths, widely used in baroque music, and throughout this piece (the second part of the fugal melody ~~is~~ from bar 4 of movement two is a circle of fifths).

The start of movement two has slightly more complex harmonies, as can be seen in the figured bass's accidentals, however after this point it is the usual functional harmony that prevails. This style of harmony continued until well into the Classical period and can be seen in Mozart's 'Singspiel the Magic Flute'. In this type of harmony, perfect cadences come to the fore, a feature that can be seen through the piece (for example the end of movement 3).

While movement 2's melody is mainly scalar or jumps of 5th, ~~movement 3's~~ movement 3 contains ~~see~~ leaps of augmented 4^{ths}, 6^{ths}, 7^{ths} and octaves.

This gives room for the solo violin to improvise slightly, a common attribute to Baroque performances. This movement also has some more unusual harmonies ~~to~~, for example a neapolitan 6th followed by a diminished 7th in just the second bar. This was harmony used sparingly even in ~~later~~ later compositions and only truly adopted as standard in

the romantic period (for example Rachmaninov's ~~second~~ piano concertos).

Movement 4 sees the return of melodic and harmonic ideas from the start, however adds to the circle of fifths chromatically descending harmonies. There are also chains of suspensions like in 'Ein Feste Berg' and some more chromatic melodic sequences (see bars 44-6). Vivaldi used all these in many of his other works.

While very typically Baroque, this set of works by Vivaldi began to pave the way for development of concertos and music alike. Due to this, many of the melodic and harmonic features he used can be found in works ~~with~~ long after his death.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a well-written essay, which demonstrates a good understanding of the genre and uses musical vocabulary correctly. It is placed at the lower end of Level 4.

Valid observations include:

- Harmony: pedals, cycle of fifths, figured bass, functional harmony, diminished 7th chords and suspensions
- Melody: ascending and descending sequences, triadic and scalar movement, leaps

There are references to the Baroque period and links are made to other works, which support the points made.

This essay would have achieved a higher mark if it had expanded on points made, such as examples of figured bass and different types of suspensions.

The wider listening links could have been more specific.

16 marks



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Make sure observations are supported by relevant links to wider listening

Question 6 (b)

The 'Batman' essay was the most popular, with over half of the students choosing this option.

It was encouraging to see many well-written essays showing considerable knowledge of the set pieces. However, there were many candidates who listed basic points without linking them either to the effect or to wider listening. Students cannot access the higher mark bands without making these links.

Students should be reminded that, whilst it is important to write a coherent and well-ordered essay, lengthy introductions and conclusions are not necessary. It was common to read essays with a biographical account of Elfmann for the first half page, which attracted no marks.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

If you answer part (a) put a cross in the box ☒ .

If you answer part (b) put a cross in the box ☒ .

If you answer part (c) put a cross in the box ☒ .

In Danny Elfman's 'Batman Returns' the melody is comprised almost exclusively of motifs, which are orchestrated in different ways to create mood and atmosphere and describe character. This technique is also used by Wagner in his ~~big~~ Ring Cycle, for example, he named the technique, leitmotiv. There are two main motifs used throughout these excerpts, the Batman motif, ~~the~~ often played by brass, ~~and~~ is an ascending idea which then has ~~four~~ ^{four} semitones at the end. ~~that semitones~~ which is also used as a motif on its own. The brass indicate heroism and grandeur, effectively describing Batman's character. Brass are also used to indicate grandeur in John Williams's 'E.T.' The second main motif is the Penguin motif, which ~~it~~ makes use

of semitones' to create an eerie and ominous feel. It is given much more dramatic orchestration, often played by the organ or choir. The theme to Pirates of the Caribbean, by Hans Zimmer, begins

with a minor section, using semitones to create a similar uncertain tense mood.

The two pieces 'Birth of a Penguin' Parts 1 and 2 also feature a falling 3rd idea, which is chromatically shifted to create tension and a ~~to~~ sense of foreshadowing.

'Batman vs. The Circus' also features a comical 'circus motif' played initially on lower brass. This is made up of quavers and has an "oom-pah" feel. All of these motifs are used extensively throughout the ~~to~~ excerpts, ~~and are~~ ~~varied~~ giving a sense of unity, but are varied by augmentation, diminution, changing the orchestration, ^{or texture}, and fragmentation.

Parts of each motif are also used as motifs in their own right. Motifs are constantly being restated by different instruments, emphasising their importance.

Danny Elfman uses many rhythmic features of interest ~~to~~ in his score for 'Batman

Returns'. The metre of the music undergoes frequent changes, typical of Elman, to accommodate the action on screen and for dramatic effect. For example, use of $\frac{5}{4}$ bars in $\frac{4}{4}$ sections in 'Batman vs. The

Circus'. Some changes of metre also create an uncertain feel as they disrupt the pulse of the music.

Effective use is made of quaver ostinatos giving the music drive and purpose. This technique is used in Bernstein's 'On the Waterfront'. Cross rhythms are also used in Elman's score and this is also used by Bernstein here. Brass fanfare

rhythms and military rhythms are also used regularly to create rhythmic excitement. Note lengths vary hugely throughout these pieces, and different lengths are used to create mood and atmosphere. For example, longer notes to create tension and suspense.



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Examiner Comments

This essay is placed at the top of Level 3.

Valid observations include the use of:

- the use of leitmotifs including a reference to Wagner
- the use of semitones to create a particular mood
- the comical 'circus' motif
- the use of quavers and the 'oom pah' feel
- the use of augmentation, diminution and fragmentation
- changes of time signature
- use of cross-rhythms and longer notes to create suspense

There are links to other pieces of film music at the beginning of the essay but in order to secure a Level 4 mark, there needed to be more links throughout the essay. There are explanations of effects, which put this essay at the top of the Level 3.

15 marks



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Examiner Tip

Avoid including irrelevant information:
confine yourself to the elements that
are required by the question

Question 6 (c)

The 'Petals' essay was the least popular of the three essay choices.

Again, it was usual to read lengthy descriptions of Saariaho's education. This essay required students to comment only on aspects of sonority heard in this piece. It is important that students confine themselves to answering the question and do not include irrelevant information.

There were some very detailed essays offered, with evidence of pertinent wider listening.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

If you answer part (a) put a cross in the box .

If you answer part (b) put a cross in the box .

If you answer part (c) put a cross in the box .

Plan

~~Cello - sul tasto, sul ponticello, heavy bowing, harmonics,
glissandi, pizz~~

~~→ Varese Density 2.5, Bereli~~

~~Optimal electronic - harmoniser, reverb~~

~~Makes it indeterminate - edge,~~

Saariaho uses different cello techniques and live electronics to create an avant-garde piece for solo cello, exploring the contrast between cleaner, reverberant sounds, in comparison to the chaotic, 'noise' from the harmoniser, and she achieves this through strict instructions in the score.

'Petals' is for a solo cello, and the cellist is very virtuosic and technically advanced. There are many techniques the cellist plays, for example heavy bowing, ~~use~~ which creates a scratching

noise to contrast the 'glassy' sonority created by the harmonics overtones. Other techniques ~~such as~~ ^{include} glissandi, pizzicato, playing sul tasto or sul ponticello to create contrasting sonorities, and heavy tremolo. The use of ~~heavy~~ extended techniques is common in new directions and 20th century music, to push the boundaries of sonority of an instrument in an extreme way. For example in Varese's 'Density 2.5', the solo flute ~~similarly~~ performs a number of extended techniques ~~the~~ ^{such as} flutter tonguing, over blowing, ~~to~~ key clicks and hits, all to explore the bounds of the sonority of the instrument, like Saariano is here.

For this piece, there are optional electronics which can be used, which alter the sonority of the cello. For this, a live technician is needed, so although there are strict instructions, the end result is indeterminate as it cannot be performed the same each time. This is similar to John Cage's 'Three Dances for Two Prepared Pianos' because ~~the~~ although there are very strict instructions on how the two pianos should be prepared with the bolts, screws and coins, ~~the~~ it is aleatoric as it can't be the same each time.

Saariaho uses the harmonizer and reverb to explore and contrast 'clean' sonority with 'noise'. The harmonizer takes the pitch and alters it by a quarter tone, and then layers it on top of the original tone, using micro-intervals to distort the sonority and create dissonance. The reverb adds space and echo to the sonority to contrast the 'noise' created from the harmoniser. It is applied from 20 - 50%, however Saariaho said that if in doubt of how much to apply, less is more, to not overwhelm the cello. Because of these added effects, the cello must be amplified so that the overall intended effect is still heard. Similarly in Cage's prepared piano 'Sonata for Prepared Piano', the piano has to be amplified because the objects in the strings act as mutes, dulling the sound so it needs to be amplified.

Overall, Saariaho uses live electronics and extended cello techniques to explore the contrasting sonorities of the cello and to push the boundaries of what an instrument is capable of, in a non-idiomatic way creating an overall avant-garde piece of music.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This essay has a comprehensive list of extended techniques used in 'Petals'.

It is placed at the top of Level 3. With more explanations, and links to wider listening, it would have been a Level 4 essay.

15 marks



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Try to explain every observation you make and include an example of the effect in another piece of music

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

1
2
3
4
5

If you answer part (a) put a cross in the box ☒ .

If you answer part (b) put a cross in the box ☒ .

If you answer part (c) put a cross in the box ☒ .

Petals by Kaija Saariaho is a ~~modern~~ new directional piece using modern technology to create throughout the piece.

There is a solo cellist who uses a range of techniques such as arco, sul ponticello, sul presto, and harmonics.

~~At the beginning of the~~ ~~At the start of the~~

There is no defined melody for this

piece however the notes are mainly all scalar and contrapuntal conjunct. There

is not set rhythm for this piece either

however it is clear you can hear when

the piece changes tempo. For example

at the beginning the piece is slower

and as the piece evolves it gets

faster and faster. This piece is a mode,

without a key. To change the texture

throughout the piece Kaija has used

effects such as reverb to thicken the

sound, throughout the piece percentage of

reverb markings are seen. As the cello plays faster the percentage of reverb used ~~o~~ increases this makes the ~~soo~~ thickness of the piece vastly different to sections where less reverb is used.

To keep the piece sounding interesting harmonics are heard ~~near~~ at the end of some bars, also the use of ~~triple~~ triplets and tremolo keeps the piece moving and sounding interesting. Other techniques such as glissando and trills are used throughout as decoration.

The dynamics in the piece are very visible. The dynamics ~~waste~~ keep changing from being p (piano) quiet to being ff (fortissimo) very loud. Lots of notes (especially the demisemiquavers) have accents ~~at~~ on them and some ~~are~~ are held notes, this creates interest in the piece as well as help show different sections of the piece. The piece dose slow down and speed up all the time like in bar 3 where at the end it has rit. (slow down) but at the start

of bar ~~from~~ 4 the ~~the~~ celloist is told to play 'energico' energetically.

The ~~pie~~ piece uses a lot of chromatism throughout as ~~double sha~~ at least every note is sharpened, flattened, double sharpened and double flattened.

Pedal notes are used a lot in this pieces. At the beginning C was the peddle note used.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

Several extended techniques are mentioned in this essay such as:

- *sul ponticello* (misspelt)
- harmonics
- reverb
- tremolo

However, there are also irrelevant sections such as descriptions of tempo.

This essay is awarded five marks (Level 1), due to:

- an incomplete list of techniques
- a lack of explanations of the techniques
- no references to wider listening pieces

5 marks

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, students are offered the following advice:

- Actively listen to the set works many times, in order become very familiar with them
- Learn the key stylistic traits of each piece, as well as common musical devices such as ostinato, pedal, circle of fifths, melodic features, rhythmic features and playing techniques used
- Make sure you know the names of instruments and voices in the set works
- Become familiar with the context of each of the set works. Be able to describe their characteristics in relation to the period in which they were written
- Listen to related repertoire of each Area of Study and learn the key stylistic traits of pieces other than the set works (wider listening)
- Develop essay writing skills, particularly in relation to time management and embedding links to wider listening
- Give specific examples in essays: for example, name a particular piece to support a point rather than just the composer
- Practise rhythm and pitch dictation regularly, paying particular attention to the aural recognition of melodic intervals
- Practise recognition of chords and modulations

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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