

Music 11, 7/13/06

Recap:

We've been discussing form in terms of

1. An entire piece: AABA, etc.

A musical work has a certain pattern of sections that reflect one another. Often, a section that ends a composition will be similar to the one that began it as a way of achieving a more conclusive feeling at the end. Usually, the final section will have certain aspects that give it its sense of relative closure. These are also present in the smaller structures of melodic form, like...

2. A period:

A pair of phrases that complement each other. (See earlier notes to characterize this complementary relationship.)

Musical form has a history in rhetoric. Each phrase in a period, like clauses in language, has (ends with) a moment of relative repose (*cadence*). The cadences are goals of the phrases. The sense of relative conclusiveness has physical support. For example, the end of the first phrase might end on a scale degree other than tonic, while the final phrase ends securely on tonic. The tonic, or scale degree 1 (“^1”) has a stronger sense of rest because it is a more stable tone than the others in its diatonic collection.

Phrases often have some sense of repetition in its smaller parts (such as *motives*). Even though motives vary in repetition, some aspects of the motive (melodic contour, rhythmic shape, etc.) will be familiar. This familiarity and variation creates a melodic *context*.

### Motive

A motive is the smallest unit of musical structure. It is a kind of musical building-block.;

Cathedrals, analogously, of different eras and architectural styles often have motives that are obvious on small and large scales, and characterize their design: arches, crosses, swirls and columns, for example, each might permeate the structure of an entire building. In music this is the same idea, although without a common language with which to discuss motives, they are difficult to verbalize. Like those in architecture, motives can give a work unity and continuity. Phrases, periods, and other larger formal sections in a piece communicate with each other in terms of their motivic details.

Examples in class:

Pages 4, 5 and 6 in the anthology (Turk)

Midterm on Monday, 7/17/06