

Stylistic Composition

2017-18

Seminar 1 – 7 March 2018
Context, Process and Rhythm

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Assignment 4: Ensemble piece in the style of Steve Reich

March	5	Assignment 3 – Ravel due	
	7	Reich	1
	14	Reich	2
	21	Reich	3
	28	EASTER – NO CLASS	
April	4	EASTER – NO CLASS	
	11	EASTER – NO CLASS	
	18	Reich	4
	25	Reich (Formative Assessment)	5
May	3	Assignment 4 – Reich due	

Compose a c.8 minute repetitive piece for a chamber ensemble in the style of Steve Reich's *Eight Lines (Octet)* and with the same instrumentation. The piece should utilize at least 1 minute of unrepeated material.

The piece should consist of three to five sections with appropriate transitions between each section. The relationship between material in different sections should be taken into account. The assignment should show an economical approach to the use of material and should be a complete piece in itself, with thought given to how to begin and end.

Create stylistically-appropriate rhythmic and melodic patterns, and consider the rhythmic and melodic structures of such material. You should use the techniques covered in class (e.g. phase shifting, augmentation, and additive and cumulative processes).

The assignment should be typeset using notational software. It should be uploaded to Grade Centre by 11:59 pm on **Thursday 3 May 2018**. Your submission should contain two files: a pdf of the score and the file from your notation software (e.g. a Sibelius/Finale/Musescore/Lilypond file).

You should aim to submit a draft of this assignment in class on **Wednesday 25 April** for formative feedback. If you have any queries regarding this assignment, contact david.pocknee@hud.ac.uk.

Steve Reich

(Super)-Brief Biography:

- Born 1936 in New York City
- Composing since the mid-1960s
- Still alive today
- Considered a “minimalist” composer, along with Philip Glass, Terry Riley, Pauline Oliveros and LaMonte Young
 - Arvo Pärt is also included in this category.

8 Lines

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Np9yApXD94>

Eight Lines/Octet

Program Note

Eight Lines is structured in five sections, of which the first and third resemble each other in their fast moving piano, cello, viola and bass clarinet figures, while the second and fourth sections resemble each other in their longer held tones in the cello. The fifth and final section combines these materials. The transitions between sections is as smooth as possible with some overlapping in the parts so that it is sometimes hard to tell exactly when one section ends and the next begins.

In the first, third and fifth sections there are somewhat longer melodic lines in the flute and/or piccolo. This interest in longer melodic lines composed of shorter patterns strung together has its roots in my earlier music as well as my studies in 1976-77 of the cantillation (chanting) of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Notes on Performance

Eight Lines (1983) is exactly the same piece as my **Octet** (1979) with the addition of a second string quartet. These additional four strings were added because of problems in performing the piece with only one player to a part. For the two violins this problem was the difficulty of playing rather awkward double stops in tune. This was solved by having two first violins and two seconds so that each player could play one note at a time instead of two, making it easier to play in tune. For the viola and cello, a second player was added to each to allow the rapid eighth note patterns to be broken up between the two players thus preventing fatigue. This small change in instrumentation has proved to make a large difference in performance and for that reason **Eight Lines** is the only version of the piece suitable for performance.

Stylistic Composition

Steve Reich – *Eight Lines* (1979 / 1983)

Instrumentation (14 instruments in all):

Flute 1 (doubling Piccolo)

Flute 2

Clarinet 1 (doubling Bass Clarinet)

Clarinet 2 (doubling Bass Clarinet)

Piano 1

Piano 2

Violin I (2 instruments – divisi strings)

Violin II (2 instruments – divisi strings)

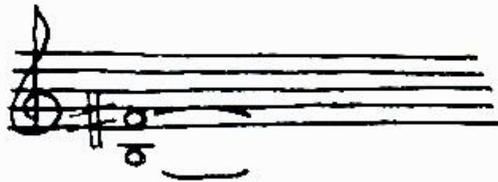
Viola (2 instruments – divisi strings)

Cello (2 instruments – divisi strings)

Minimalism

Minimal “material” & repetition

Composition 1960 #7



to be held for a long time

W. Mark Young
July 1960

Pauline Oliveros:

Bye Bye Butterfly (1967):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMCTxkFwLHw>

<http://teropa.info/loop/#/title>

Terry Riley – *In C*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H6gbgeKTv6M>

Minimalism often utilizes consonant harmonies.

in C.

The image displays a musical score for the piece 'in C.' by Terry Riley. The score is written in a single treble clef and consists of 34 numbered measures. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes, along with rests and accidentals (sharps and naturals). The piece is characterized by its minimalist and repetitive style, typical of Riley's work. The measures are arranged in six rows: the first row contains measures 1-6, the second row 7-10, the third row 11-15, the fourth row 16-21, the fifth row 22-28, and the sixth row 29-34. Each measure is clearly numbered above the staff.

Extract from Terry Riley's *In C* (1968)

In C

Performing Directions

All performers play from the same page of 53 melodic patterns played in sequence.

Any number of any kind of instruments can play. A group of about 35 is desired if possible but smaller or larger groups will work. If vocalist(s) join in they can use any vowel and consonant sounds they like.

Patterns are to be played consecutively with each performer having the freedom to determine how many times he or she will repeat each pattern before moving on to the next. There is no fixed rule as to the number of repetitions a pattern may have, however, since performances normally average between 45 minutes and an hour and a half, it can be assumed that one would repeat each pattern from somewhere between 45 seconds and a minute and a half or longer.

It is very important that performers listen very carefully to one another and this means occasionally to drop out and listen. As an ensemble, it is very desirable to play very softly as well as very loudly and to try to diminuendo and crescendo together.

Each pattern can be played in unison or canonically in any alignment with itself or with its neighboring patterns. One of the joys of IN C is the interaction of the players in polyrhythmic combinations that spontaneously arise between patterns. Some quite fantastic shapes will arise and disintegrate as the group moves through the piece when it is properly played.

It is important not to hurry from pattern to pattern but to stay on a pattern long enough to interlock with other patterns being played. As the performance progresses, performers should stay within 2 or 3 patterns of each other. It is important not to race too far ahead or to lag too far behind.

The ensemble can be aided by the means of an eighth note pulse played on the high c's of the piano or on a mallet instrument. It is also possible to use improvised percussion in strict rhythm (drum set, cymbals, bells, etc.), if it is carefully done and doesn't overpower the ensemble. All performers must play strictly in rhythm and it is essential that everyone play each pattern carefully. It is advised to rehearse patterns in unison before attempting to play the piece, to determine that everyone is playing correctly.

The tempo is left to the discretion of the performers, obviously not too slow, but not faster than performers can comfortably play.

It is important to think of patterns periodically so that when you are resting you are conscious of the larger periodic composite accents that are sounding, and when you re-enter you are aware of what effect your entrance will have on the music's flow.

The group should aim to merge into a unison at least once or twice during the performance. At the same time, if the players seem to be consistently too much in the same alignment of a pattern, they should try shifting their alignment by an eighth note or quarter note with what's going on in the rest of the ensemble.

It is OK to transpose patterns by an octave, especially to transpose up. Transposing down by octaves works best on the patterns containing notes of long durations. Augmentation of rhythmic values can also be effective.

If for some reason a pattern can't be played, the performer should omit it and go on.

Instruments can be amplified if desired. Electronic keyboards are welcome also.

IN C is ended in this way: when each performer arrives at figure #53, he or she stays on it until the entire ensemble has arrived there. The group then makes a large crescendo and diminuendo a few times and each player drops out as he or she wishes.

TERRY RILEY

Music As A Gradual Process

Steve Reich (1968) from *Writings On Music 1965-2000*:

"I do not mean the process of composition but rather pieces of music that are, literally, processes.

The distinctive thing about musical processes is that they determine all the note-to-note (sound-to-sound) details and the overall form simultaneously. (Think of a round or infinite canon.)

I am interested in perceptible processes. I want to be able to hear the process happening throughout the sounding music.

To facilitate closely detailed listening a musical process should happen extremely gradually.

Performing and listening to a gradual musical process resembles:

Pulling back a swing, releasing it, and observing it gradually come to rest;

Turning over an hour glass and watching the sand slowly run through to the bottom;

Placing your feet in the sand by the ocean's edge and watching, feeling, and listening to the waves gradually bury them.

Although I may have the pleasure of discovering musical processes and composing the musical material to run through them, once the process is set up and loaded it runs by itself."

http://www.bussigel.com/systemsforplay/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Reich_Gradual-Process.pdf

Phase Shifting in Reich

Come Out (1966)

- Tape <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0WVh1D0N50>

- *Piano Phase* (1967)

- for two pianos
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQihuaedvSU>

- *Violin Phase* (1967)

- for violin and tape or four violins
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geXfkGXI6I8>

- *Pendulum Music* (1968)

- for 3 or 4 microphones, amplifiers and loudspeakers
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fU6qDeJPT-w>

- *Clapping Music* (1972)

- for two musicians clapping
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3qS3oc_tK4
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eu-tRXgOrdg>

Clapping Music

Clapping Music

Features of the rhythm:

- Small groups of pitches surrounded by rests
- A combination of on and off-beats (syncopation)
- Less than 50% of the bar should be rests, to ensure a constant quaver pulse.
- Not in 4/4 – makes the rhythmic emphasis at the bar level

Music For Pieces of Wood

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gy2kyRrXm2g>

Phase Shifting In *Eight Lines*

Pianos 1 & 2, first bar:

The image displays a musical score for two pianos, Pno. 1 and Pno. 2, in the first bar. The score is written in 5/4 time and features a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). Pno. 1 is shown in a grand staff with both treble and bass clefs. The treble clef part begins with a quarter rest, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The bass clef part starts with a quarter note, followed by eighth and sixteenth notes. Pno. 2 is also shown in a grand staff. Its treble clef part consists of a whole rest for the entire bar. The bass clef part begins with a quarter note, followed by eighth and sixteenth notes. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings such as *f* (forte).

Phase Shifting In The Pianos

Rehearsal 13 (Section I)

Pno. 1

Perfect 5th

Pno. 2

Rehearsal 19 (Section II)

Perfect 5th

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Rehearsal 39 (Section III)

Pno. 1

Major 6th

Pno. 2

Rehearsal 43 (Section III)

Major 3rd

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Rehearsal 52 (Section IV)

Pno. 1

Perfect 4th

Pno. 2

Rehearsal 71 (Section V)

Minor 3rd

Pno. 1

Pno. 2

Eight Lines

Sections In Eight Lines

Rehearsal Mark (Recording Timings)

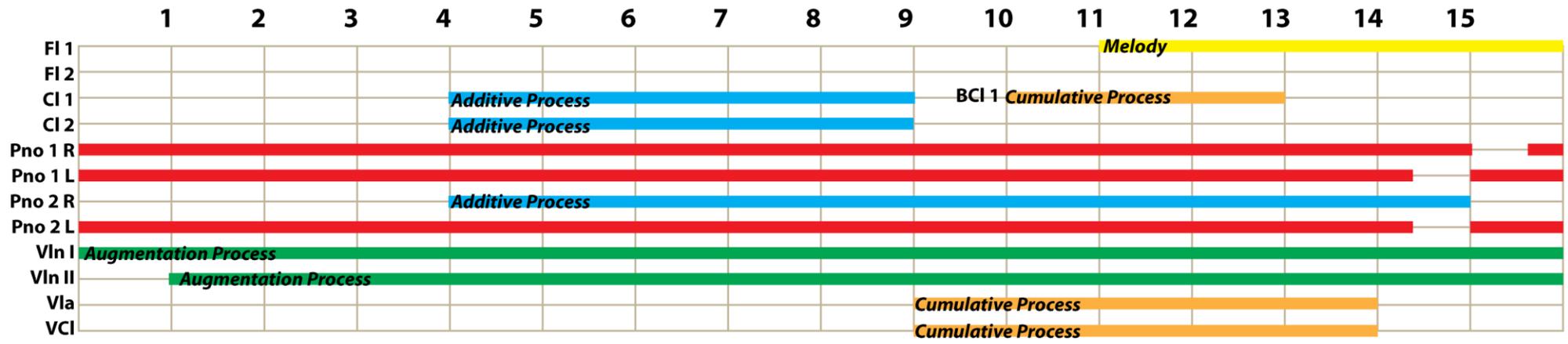
- I** 0 - 15 (0:00)
- II** 16 - 31 (3:52)
- III** 32 - 45 (7:06)
- IV** 46 - 61 (10:58)
- V** 62 - 74A (13:56)

All timings are from the Bang On A Can "New York Counterpoint" CD (Nonesuch, 1998) that is in the library.

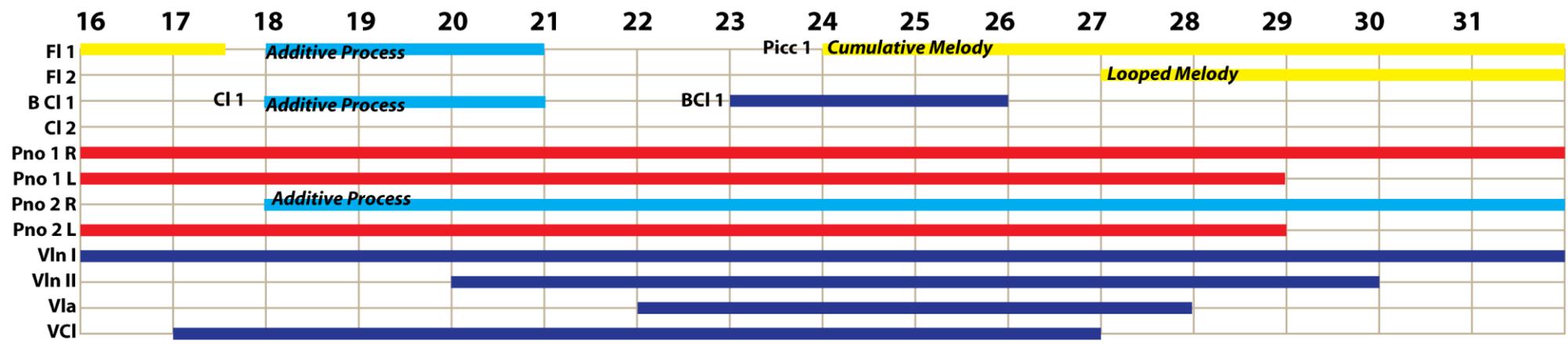
Section Number

Formal Plan of Eight Lines

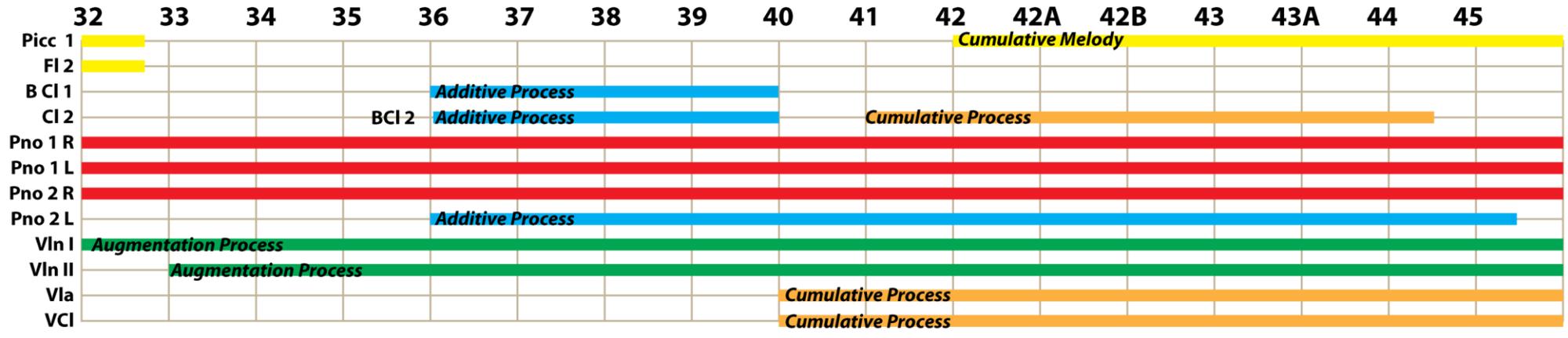
Section 1



Section 2



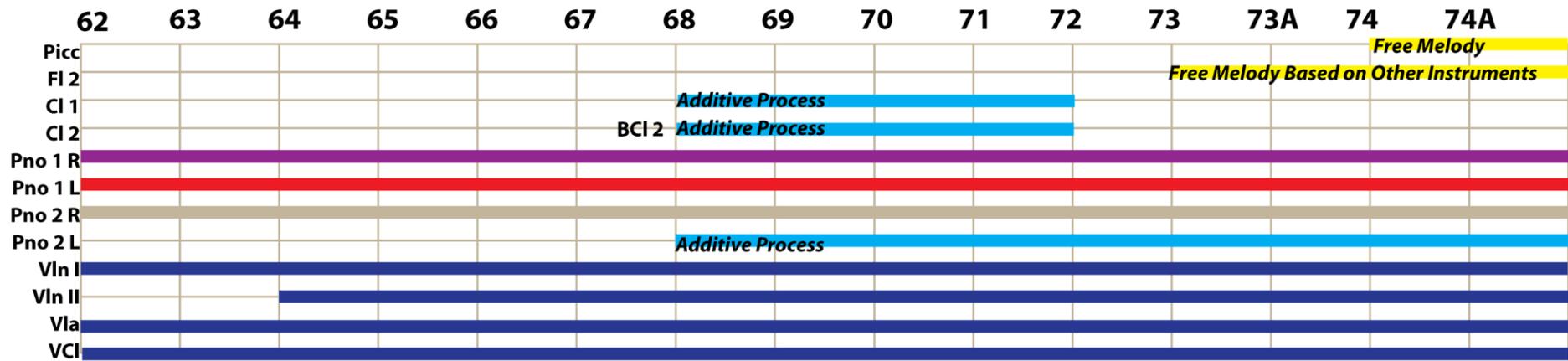
Section 3



Section 4



Section 5



Note: For clarity, all rehearsal marks are shown as the same length, but in reality they vary between 2 and 12 bars in length

Pieces (not everything):

- *Come Out*, tape (1966)
- *Piano Phase* for two pianos, or two marimbas (1967)
- *Violin Phase* for violin and tape or four violins (1967)
- *Pendulum Music* for 3 or 4 microphones, amplifiers and loudspeakers (1968)
- *Four Organs* for four electric organs and maracas (1970)
- *Drumming* for 4 pairs of tuned bongo drums, 3 marimbas, 3 glockenspiels, 2 female voices, whistling and piccolo (1970/1971)
- *Clapping Music* for two musicians clapping (1972)
- *Music for Pieces of Wood* for five pairs of tuned claves (1973)
- *Six Pianos* (1973) – transcribed as *Six Marimbas* (1986)
- *Music for 18 Musicians* (1974–76)
- *Octet* (1979) – re-orchestrated as *Eight Lines* (1983)
- *Tehillim* for voices and ensemble (1981)
- *Vermont Counterpoint* for amplified flute and tape (1982)
- *The Desert Music* for chorus and orchestra or voices and ensemble (1983)
- *New York Counterpoint* for amplified clarinet and tape, or 11 clarinets and bass clarinet (1985)
- *Electric Counterpoint* for electric guitar or amplified acoustic guitar and tape (1987, for Pat Metheny)
- *Different Trains* for string quartet and tape (1988)

Selection of Steve Reich's works

- *Come Out* for tape (1966) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0WVh1D0N50>
- *Piano Phase* for two pianos, or two marimbas (1967) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7P_9hDzG1i0
- *Violin Phase* for violin and tape or four violins (1967) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Su1OvwR3wB4>
- *Pendulum Music* for 3 or 4 microphones, amplifiers and loudspeakers (1968) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fU6qDeJPT-w>
- *Four Organs* for four electric organs and maracas (1970) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8ummi3d3Cs>
- *Phase patterns* for four electric organs (1970) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8nX30aUZoE>
- *Drumming* for 4 pairs of tuned bongo drums, 3 marimbas, 3 glockenspiels, 2 female voices, whistling and piccolo (1970/1971) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9DbqNIUNqc>
- *Clapping Music* for two musicians clapping (1972) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzkOFJMI5i8>
- *Music for Pieces of Wood* for five pairs of tuned claves (1973) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mv_8UaP_QRI
- *Six Pianos* (1973) – transcribed as *Six Marimbas* (1986) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RaYvMwQd3cs>
- *Music for 18 Musicians* (1974–76) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5U9577N-dQ>
- ***Octet* (1979) – re-orchestrated as *Eight Lines* (1983)** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Np9yApXD94>
- *Tehillim* for voices and ensemble (1981) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fruY31DQvb0>
- *Vermont Counterpoint* for amplified flute and tape (1982) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIRdZu9oM7o>
- *The Desert Music* for chorus and orchestra or voices and ensemble (1983) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5qOtXql-ol>
- *New York Counterpoint* for amplified clarinet and tape, or 11 clarinets and bass clarinet (1985) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMb9r0Kq8Ec>
- *Electric Counterpoint* for electric guitar or amplified acoustic guitar and tape (1987,) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOAS6ik796s>
- *Different Trains* for string quartet and tape (1988) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1E4Bjt_zVJc