

MC110 Intro to Comp.

Assignment 1 – Beginning a Piece

This assignment is an exercise in jump-starting the creative process, fine-tuning your imagination, and getting your thoughts and ideas organized before beginning the actual work of writing down notes. It is an assignment not in actual composing, but in imagined composing.

Think about a piece of music that you would like to compose. It may be something you have already been thinking about in your head for a long time, or it may be a completely new inspiration. It can be in any style or medium you choose – a song, a symphony, electronic noise, jazz tune...anything is fine.

Imagine this piece of music as vividly as you can. Don't force it, but pay attention to it. Do not try to write down any actual notes or document any real sounds. Just listen to the music in your head. Write down everything you can think of to say about the music. How long is the piece? What instruments or sound sources are being used to create the music? Is it in many sections, or one long flow of music? What is the emotional content of the piece? Is it happy? Sad? Loud? Quiet? Etc...

In articulating the things the things that you know about the piece, you will also be identifying many things you don't know about it. Much of composing is about asking yourself questions and in many ways a piece is only finished when all your questions have been answered.

Rather than doing it all in one sitting, try to come back to the piece from time to time throughout the week. See if you can learn more about it, "hear" it more clearly, or differently. Answer as many questions about it as you can, but don't write any music. Only imagine it, and describe it in words.

Try to imagine this piece to the point where you feel as if writing it down would be like transcribing it from memory.

This assignment is to be written down and turned in via email (either in the body of the email or as a pdf attachment) as a response to the first group email I will send later this week. This will allow me to make sure you are receiving my emails.