The Elements of Music

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rhythm: long sounds and short sounds combined with silence in patterns

beat: the underlying pulse of a piece of music, like a heartbeat

pulse

regular

metre: the organisation of beats into groups

1234 ... 1234

tempo: the speed of a piece of music

time

speed

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form & structure: the plan or design of a piece of music

things that are the same

things that are different

the order of ideas in the piece

ternary (ABA)

repetition

variation

structure

binary (AB)

rondo (ABACA)

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melody: higher and lower pitches sung or played one after another

harmony: higher and lower pitches sung or played at the same time

pitch: the highness or lowness of sound

chords: different pitches played at the same time

accompaniment: supports the melody by using notes from chords

the tune

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expression: using dynamics and articulation to create an effect

dynamics: the softness or loudness of sounds

forte f (loudly)

piano p (softly)

articulation: the way higher and lower sounds are sung or played to create an effect

staccato (detached)

legato (smooth and connected)

accented

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timbre: the particular tone, colour or quality of sounds

ways to describe tone colour or tone quality

bright melody

warm vocals

raspy trumpet

piercing flute

foreboding drums

texture: the layers of sound in a musical work and the relationship between them

ways to describe texture or layers of sound

thick (with many layers or parts)

thin (with few layers or parts)

unison (all the instruments or voices on the same line)

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