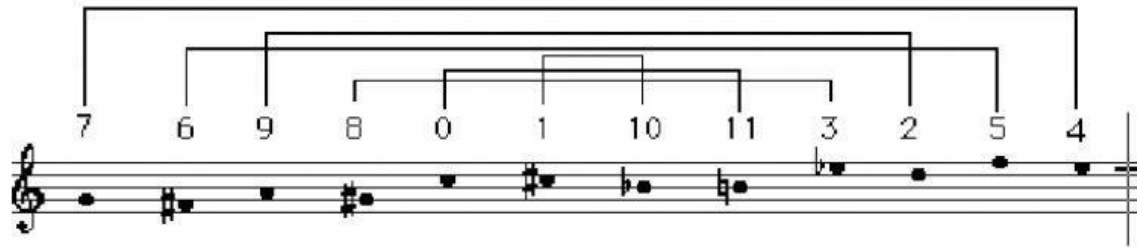


## Atonal Music (early 20<sup>th</sup> century)

**Atonal** music is music that has no sense of being in a particular key. Common characteristics of **atonal** music include **dissonance** and **discords**, large intervals, and short fragments of musical ideas.



In **atonal music** every note of the CHROMATIC scale is of equal importance and there is no pull towards any particular tonic note.

**There is no sense of tonality or key in atonal music. It will generally sound pretty weird and random!**

### CLUSTER

A chord made of consecutive notes which clash.

# Musique Concrete

- This is an experimental technique of composition using recorded sounds as raw material. The sounds can be natural, such as birds singing or water running. Or, the sounds could be deliberately created, such as a door slamming, a clock ticking or the noises made by traffic or machinery.
- The recorded sounds are then modified using simple editing techniques such as cutting and re-assembling, playing backwards, slowing down or speeding up. Some composers have combined Musique concrète techniques with electronic sounds or acoustic instruments.

The composer Pierre Schaeffer, composed a collection of pieces in 1948 called '*Five Studies of Noises*' (*Cinq etudes de bruits*). Listen to the 1<sup>st</sup> etude – '*Study for Railways*' (*Etude aux Chemins de fer*) which features recordings of sounds made by trains running along the railway tracks. Listen for:

- Piece is divided into sections, indicated by the sound of a train whistle
- Some sounds are repeated in a loop, creating an OSTINATO effect.
- Some recorded sounds slow down to half speed causing them to sound distorted
- The piece begins and ends with the sound of a train whistle.

The German composer Stockhausen composed '*Kontakte*' which combines sounds recorded on tape with live instruments. His aim was to make *contact* between

- Pitched notes and noises
- Instrumental sounds and electronic sounds
- Live performance and pre-recorded sounds

Listen and note the following:

- Electronic sounds changing and transforming
- Some sounds are similar to helicopter blades speeding up and slowing down
- Some sounds are similar to a car motor trying to start
- Pre-recorded sounds using vowels and consonants
- Piano and percussion sounds
- Electronic sounds resembling piano and percussion sounds

e.g. Money – Pink Floyd

This song also makes use of Musique concrète techniques. The very beginning of the song features money-related sound effects such as the ringing of a cash register and the jingling of coins. These sound effects also appear at other points in the song.

The Beatles experimented with techniques such as multi-track recording, overdubbing, tape loops and electronic manipulation of sounds

e.g. *Revolution 9*

The track is a sound collage of vocal and instrumental sounds combined with a variety of sound effects. Some of the vocal sounds include spoken words, screaming, mumbling and cheering. Much of the track consists of tape loops that are faded in and out, many of which are sampled from other songs and pieces of music.

e.g. *Tomorrow never knows* - Beatles

Listen out for:

- Altered drum sound using 'reverse cymbals' recording technique
- Influence of INDIAN music seen in use of a DRONE and SITAR.
- Bass guitar RIFF
- Natural sounds such as laughing heard in recording.
- Recording of laughing is played at double speed to produce a 'seagull' sound
- Vocal melody is MODAL
- Electric guitar solo is DISTORTED using techniques such as being played in reverse.
- Structure of song is STROPHIC



# Jazz Funk

Jazz Funk Music is a merging of trad. jazz characteristics with electronic instruments requiring electronic amplification.

It has a characteristic **strong** back beat or “groove”, spearheaded by James Brown and his drummers.

Another characteristic is the use of electric instruments (*e.g. Rhodes piano, Moog synthesizer and bass guitar.*)

**Jazz-funk** recordings typically used electric bass and electric piano in the **rhythm section**, in place of the double bass and acoustic piano that were typically used in **jazz** up to that point

## Key musical attributes:

- Jazz/ funk ‘head’ followed by improvisations
  - Use of syncopation
  - Ostinato patterns
- Extended groove sections
- Jazz instrumentation with electric instruments
- Use of synthesizer/ Hammond organ
  - Prominent bass
- Melodic and/ or complex bass lines

## Instrumentation

- Synthesiser/ electric piano
- Rhythm guitar
- Bass guitar
- Drum kit

- Herbie Hancock– *Head hunters* (1974)

Earth, wind and fire – *Runnin'* (1977)

James Brown – *People get up and drive your funky soul*

# Soul

late 1950s to mid 1970s

- Soul music is a genre of African American popular music that led to many later genres, from funk and dance music to hip hop and **contemporary R&B**.
- It developed in the USA in the late 1950s from African American church music called "gospel music".
- After slavery ended in 1865, African Americans weren't welcome in the churches of white Americans, so they built their own churches and sang Christian songs with African-American vocal styles and rhythms.
- They sang joyful, up-tempo gospel songs while clapping and moving to the beat, and they sang slower gospel songs that expressed deep feelings like **yearning** for God's love.
- These different styles led to the two main styles of soul music.

## Instrumentation

- Vocals and backing vocals (male and female)
- Electric Guitar
- Piano / Electric Piano
- Electric Organ / Keyboards
- Bass
- Percussion
- Drum Kit
- Horn Section (Trumpet, Saxophones, and Trombone)
- String Section

## Key attributes:

- Horn section (trumpets/saxes/trombones)
  - Backing vocals
- Gospel influenced vocals
  - Back beat



- Aretha Franklin– *I say a little prayer*

Marven Gaye– *I heard it through the grapevine*

- Otis Redding– *Sitting on the dock of the Bay*

Stevie Wonder– *Uptight*

Now try the following 20<sup>th</sup> century quizzes:

[https://mymusiconline.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/hotpots/i7\\_higher\\_20and21centuries.htm](https://mymusiconline.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/hotpots/i7_higher_20and21centuries.htm)

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