



Open College of the Arts

Formative feedback

Student name	Anett McCaul	Student number	521302
Course/Unit	From Present to Past	Assignment number	1
Type of tutorial	Written		

Overall Comments

This is an encouraging first submission. You write in an articulate and expressive way about your own experiences with music, and have made positive first steps into reserach and critical listening. As you move forward with the unit you can focus on developing your technical analysis, academic writing and bibliographic practice.

Assessment potential

You may want to get credit for your hard work and achievements with the OCA by formally submitting your work for assessment at the end of the module. More and more people are taking the idea of lifelong learning seriously by submitting their work for assessment but it is entirely up to you. We are just as keen to support you whether you study for pleasure or to gain qualifications. Please consider whether you want to put your work forward for assessment and let me know your decision when you submit Assignment 2. I can then give you feedback on how well your work meets the assessment requirements.

Feedback on assignment

Subject based knowledge and understanding, context, communication

Film Music Essay:

In this short piece of writing you cover a lot of relevant points about the use of music in *Cast Away*. You make an excellent observation about music not being used on the island at all,

though in future you can go further in spelling out the implications of your points. For example, what exactly do you think is being implied by the lack of music?

Morton Lauridsen Profile:

In this essay you've given a short intro to Lauridsen's music and explored some of your own responses, demonstrating your awareness of musical and technical devices and terminology, and an ability to articulate your own responses to music. This is a good start to your academic writing.

The section on Lauridsen himself covers his biography, a list of his works and some influences. This is all relevant material, though the longest section is the list of works. When writing in an academic context it's important to consider how you're using the word-count - look at each section and consider what it adds to the points your making. In this case: what does a long list of works add the overall piece of work? Is there anything you could use that space for which would be more relevant? It's probable that if this was an assessed piece of work you'd get more credit for interpreting or summarising information, rather than simply reporting it. In part two, carefully consider what the most relevant information is, and how you can best present it within the word-count.

In the section on individual works you've identified some technical devices, for example canon and imitation, and you link these to perceptual features, for example slow melodic lines giving a relaxing sound to the music. This is a good application of critical listening, and shows an encouraging start to this part of your study. As you continue through the unit you can take these observations further: for example one can imagine a piece with rich harmonic colour and slow melodic lines which is tragic or cold, rather than relaxing. Try to home in on what exactly about a specific piece gives it its character, and how you think the composer has achieved this.

You've made use of several sources to support your work, including one by the composer himself. This is a good start to your academic research practice. Moving forward, there are several things you can do to develop this further:

- In-text citations: you've cited the websites in the "References" list, but you can show where in you work each source is used with a footnote or bracketed citation. I've included a link below to the OCA referencing style which shows how to do this.
- Diversify your sources: while you've used several different websites, as you continue to develop your research work try to include other sources, such as books, journal articles or encyclopaedia entries.
- Avoid Wikipedia: while encyclopaedias are a good source of information, Wikipedia is generally not considered a reliable academic source as anyone can edit it, and the sources of information are often not referenced. Wikipedia can be a good starting point for your research, but shouldn't be cited directly.

Reflection:

In the reflection you've documented the work done for this section of the course. This is good, but in future you can afford to home in more on specific learning experiences. Rather than writing about every piece of work, were there any general or specific things about the unit which stood out? Were there any aspects of the work which you found particularly difficult, enjoyable or unexpected? You should also assess your work against the marking criteria, as is suggested in assignment one.

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis , stylistic awareness

In the research tasks you've gathered lots of relevant information, though you should document the sources you've used as you did in the assignment work. For example, the section on Native American music contains some really interesting information about the social and linguistic role of music within society, but you haven't included any documentation of where these facts came from. In future, apply the same research practices to both assignment work and research tasks.

Listening & Learning Logs or Blogs

Stylistic awareness, context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

The listening log is off to a good start, but as in the assignment you can take your observations further. You describe your emotional responses to music very well - as you move forward try to link these to more concrete or technical observations about the music. For example, you describe Saariaho's music as creating a mysterious atmosphere - in future try to describe why or how you think this happens.

Some of the entries are very short - try to include at least some technical or critical observations in your entries. You should also try to include at least one or two pieces of music from each genre being studied. For example, there are no log entries from the New Complexity or Spectralism sections of the unit.

Suggested reading/listening

Context

OCA Referencing Guide: https://www.oca-student.com/sites/default/files/oca-content/key-resources/res-files/harvard_referencing_140514.pdf

Pointers for the next assignment

- Go further into your points, not just what is happening, but try to get to the why and the how.
- Take your emotional and personal response to music and try to link it to specific technical and musical features.
- Continue to develop your research and referencing practice.

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Areas for development</u>
Good ability to articulate own feelings about music.	These feelings can be more strongly linked to concrete musical features.
Information gathering off to a good start.	Information can be more thoroughly documented and referenced.
	Can access a wider range of sources, and avoid low-quality sources like Wikipedia.

<u>Tutor</u>	Desmond Clarke
<u>Date</u>	8.7.19
<u>Next assignment due</u>	1.9.19