SMT–V Sample Proposals

There are many ways to approach the *SMT–V* proposal, but successful proposals typically have some of the following characteristics:
- present a scholarly music theoretical argument using minimal jargon
- specifically address how they will take advantage of the video format, and why the video format is appropriate for the project
- specifically address how/why they will appeal (in part) to a general audience
- include some multimedia, for instance, (a) supplementary figures or images and/or (b) links to audio or video files
- demonstrate engagement with existing scholarship (e.g. with footnotes, internal citations, and/or bibliography)
- articulate a specific conclusion
- proposals analyzing a single piece of music should make a connection to a broader topic

Some things to avoid in an *SMT–V* proposal:
- proposing a project that cannot be undertaken in 12 minutes or less
- extensive literature review (projects that are primarily a response to existing literature are probably not going to appeal to a general audience, and are likely more suitable for a print journal or *SMT–Pod*)
- complicated figures or examples that might require a viewer to pause the video or download a file for closer study (consider, instead, a caption describing how you might animate or annotate a complex figure to make your meaning clear to the viewer)

Max Martin, a prolific pop producer, implemented an idiosyncratic formal unit in his turn-of-the-millennium singles performed by the Backstreet Boys, *NSYNC, and Britney Spears (see Example 1). This unit, which I call the **complement chorus**, has not been discussed in existing publications on form in pop/rock music. The complement chorus is recognizable based on distinct features of the chorus itself as well as its placement within the larger form of the song: the complement chorus is always first presented after the bridge of the song (Example 2); the complement chorus uses the same orchestration, harmony, and lyrics as the chorus, but introduces a new melodic line with a distinct rhythmic profile that is complementary to the rhythms of the original chorus.

A **cumulative chorus** occurs when the complement chorus is layered on top of another repetition of the regular chorus, joining together like the teeth of a zipper. A track using this phenomenon will have a chorus that is rhythmically gapped; the complement chorus in turn uses an opposing rhythmic profile that fills in these gaps. The result of layering these two melodies in the cumulative chorus is quasi-contrapuntal, with a hocket-like rhythmic profile between the two lines (Example 3).

Peres 2016 has documented how commonly choruses accrue sonic density as they repeat. A far more common type of elaboration both within and outside of Max Martin's oeuvre is the addition of descant vocals over the chorus melody, discussed by Fink 2018. Descant lines are typically improvisatory, sung by a soloist rather than a group, and sung over the chorus rather than replacing the chorus. Complement choruses by contrast are more tightly-knit, are sung by the entire ensemble, and are presented on their own as a standalone section. Because Martin began writing complement choruses while working with the Backstreet Boys, I speculate that he chose the structured complement chorus instead of freeform descant vocals to better coordinate the vocals of five separate people while still giving each member their own line in the cumulative chorus. Precedents for this technique can be found in the cumulative processes in gospel vamps (Shelley 2019) and the music of ABBA (such as "Name of the Game")—both of which involve the coordination of several singers. Songs performed by soloists are more likely to use descant vocals rather than a complement chorus, but while Martin first uses complement choruses with boy bands, he later incorporates it into the solo music of Britney Spears (where backup singers play an important role). This suggests that the complement chorus became part of Martin's idiolect even when writing for soloists instead of groups. I view the complement chorus as one of several twists on the standard verse-chorus paradigm that have developed in recent decades, alongside the dance chorus (Barna 2018) or the anti-telos chorus (Nobile 2019).
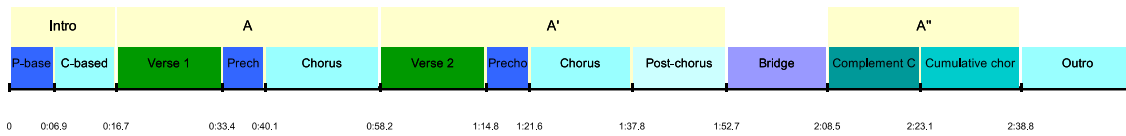
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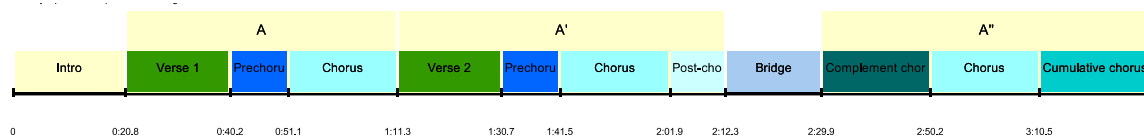
Example 1. Table of songs using complement chorus.

Title	Artist	Month/year of (single) release	Notes about complement chorus
"It's Gotta Be You"	Backstreet Boys	October 1998	
"Don't Wanna Lose You Now"	Backstreet Boys	October 1998	Uses slightly different lyrics than chorus
"I Want It That Way"	Backstreet Boys	April 1999	Only partial layering of chorus and complement chorus
"Bye Bye Bye"	*NSYNC	January 2000	Max Martin not credited
"No Strings Attached"	*NSYNC	March 2000	Less overt; chorus is not as gapped
"Oops! ...I Did It Again"	Britney Spears	March 2000	
"It's Gonna Be Me"	*NSYNC	June 2000	
"I'll Never Stop"	*NSYNC	June 2000	Only partial layering of chorus and complement chorus
"Shape of My Heart"	Backstreet Boys	July 2000	
"Get Another Boyfriend"	Backstreet Boys	July 2000	Uses different lyrics than chorus
"Lucky"	Britney Spears	August 2000	
"Stronger"	Britney Spears	November 2000	

Example 2. Formal diagrams showing placement of the complement chorus and cumulative chorus.

a. Backstreet Boys, "It's Gotta Be You"

Intro		A			A'				A"		Outro
P-base	C-based	Verse 1	Prech	Chorus	Verse 2	Precho	Chorus	Post-chorus	Bridge	Complement C	Cumulative chor	Outro

0   0:06.9   0:16.7   0:33.4 0:40.1   0:58.2   1:14.8 1:21.6   1:37.8   1:52.7   2:08.5   2:23.1   2:38.8

b. Britney Spears, "Oops! …I Did It Again"

Intro	A			A'				Bridge	A"		
Intro	Verse 1	Prechoru	Chorus	Verse 2	Prechoru	Chorus	Post-cho	Bridge	Complement chor	Chorus	Cumulative chorus

0   0:20.8   0:40.2 0:51.1   1:11.3   1:30.7 1:41.5   2:01.9 2:12.3   2:29.9   2:50.2   3:10.5

Example 3. Transcriptions of chorus and complement chorus, with hocket-like technique highlighted.

a. Backstreet Boys, "It's Gotta Be You"

b. Britney Spears, "Oops! …I Did It Again"

Proposal for SMT-V

Analyzing Dance as Music: One Moment in Balanchine's *Concerto Barocco*

There is an iconic passage near the end of Balanchine's *Concerto Barocco* (1941), set to J.S. Bach's Concerto in D Minor for Two Violins (BWV 1043), in which ten female dancers hop on pointe, first in unison and then in two groups, creating an exciting pattern of syncopated visual accents against the music. See Video 1 (https://youtu.be/16zGPDTp3j0), annotated with dancers' and musical counts. This is the climax of a "plotless" ballet that is, nonetheless, about music and movement. To date, the relationship between dance and music in Balanchine's choreography has been studied primarily through the phenomenological lens used in dance studies, wherein dance is understood to be the communication of feeling through symbolic forms. However, in Balanchine's plotless ballet, dance communicates musical ideas in addition to feelings.

In this video essay, I analyze dance *as music* by transcribing dance into a music-based notation that graphs choreographic rhythm and pitch on a staff aligned with the musical score. Examples 1 and 2 show my transcriptions of the dance steps seen in Video 1 in choreomusical notation, which graphs choreographic rhythm and choreographic pitch (the vertical position of a dancer's center of mass). The notation is explained in Example 3. Using annotated videos and choreomusical scores, I argue that the visual rhythms created by Balanchine's choreography amplify metrical grouping dissonances in Bach's musical score in a manner similar to what jazz musicians such as Hazel Scott, Eddie South, Django Reinhardt, and Stéphane Grappelli were doing with Bach's music in the 1920s and '30s: swinging the classics. Balanchine's choreography accentuates the backbeats and weak beats of Bach's music (as shown in Examples 1 and 2), and it points to Bach's metrically dissonant four-eighth-pulse accompaniment pattern (shown in Example 4) by presenting a direct cross-modal echo immediately after it is heard.

Concerto Barocco is an exemplar of Balanchine's music-derived choreographic style and of his jazz-inflected neo-classical ballet style. In *Barocco,* Balanchine imitates Bach's specific musical ideas cross-modally and cross-temporally and amplifies Bach's rhythmic patterns while experimenting with jazz-derived ideas. This video will show in one brief example how Balanchine's choreography interacts with music not only in terms of feeling and gesture but also through musical patterns both seen and heard.

Hops on pointe, counts 1, 2, 3.

Visual/choreographic accent on count 4.

Example 1.   Choreographic 4-layer against the music's 2- and 6-layers (1=eighth). Dancers' counts are notated above the dance staff. Each dance count "4" is marked choreographically. J.S. Bach, Concerto in D minor for Two Violins, BWV 1043, third movement, mm. 127–130.

Group on stage left, on count 3.   Group on stage right, on count 4.

Example 2.   Choreographic 3-layer and 4-layer against the music's 2- and 6-layers (1=eighth). Dancers' counts are notated above each dance staff. The final dance count in each group ("3" or "4") is marked choreographically. J.S. Bach, Concerto in D minor for Two Violins, BWV 1043, third movement, mm. 131–34.

Example 3.   Choreomusical notation graphs dance steps in musical notation (Leaman 2016).

Example 4.   Four measures of a four-eighth-pulse musical accompaniment figure, which immediately precedes four measures of a four-eighth-pulse choreographic figure shown in Example 1. "1" and "4" in the musical figure are articulated, while "1" and "4" are accentuated visually in the choreography that follows it. J.S. Bach, Concerto in D minor for Two Violins, BWV 1043, third movement, mm. 123–27.

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Appropriating Copland's Fanfare

Anthony Bushard, Stanley Kleppinger, Neil Lerner, Scott Murphy, and others have explored the indelible impact of a musical approach, often casually called the "Copland Sound," upon a significant cross-section of American films. Following Lerner's suggestion that this approach is more properly described as a multiplicity of "Copland sounds," this presentation explores the stylistic and associative evolution of the specific Copland sound forged in his *Fanfare for the Common Man* (1942). This style, called here the *triumphant exordium*, consists of a constellation of specific musical features: a slow tempo; monophony (usually brass solo/soli) with percussion interjection; sostenuto, angular, disjunct melody that features "bugleity" (Harrison 2016); and diatonic language with stress on triadic harmony.

Even when it was composed in the midst of World War II, the intentions surrounding the *Fanfare's* affiliation with American patriotism were ambiguous, as illustrated by the composer's struggle to find a title. In none of the dozen or so titles he apparently discarded are America or the Allied Forces directly named, and the ultimate title *"for the Common Man"* is designed, by the composer's own explanation, to transcend national interests. Even if Copland intended to draw a sharp line between humanism and patriotism, in wartime America such distinction proved too subtle to survive—especially after he elevated the fanfare's exultant rhetoric by incorporating it into the grandiose apotheosis of his Third Symphony.

Since that time, other composers and Copland himself have imitated and troped the *triumphant exordium*. After summarizing the *Fanfare's* original musical and extra-musical contexts, this presentation illuminates this legacy through three case studies.

John Williams's symphonic work *Summon the Heroes*, written for the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, makes obvious use of the *triumphant exordium* from its outset. To the extent that this work is viewed as celebrating the same ideals as the occasion for which it was composed, it would seem to reflect the style's original connotations as reflected in Copland's title. But the context for this music, like that of wartime America in 1942, smudges the distinction between pan-national humanism and American nationalism. Does this music fête the international spirit of the Olympics, the hosting of this Olympic event on American soil, or both?

In contrast, James Horner's music for the opening sequence of the 1995 film *Apollo 13* clearly connects the *triumphant exordium* to American exceptionalism. This sequence, narrated by Walter Cronkite, summarizes the early Apollo missions and eulogizes the astronauts killed in the launchpad disaster of Apollo 1. The heroic efforts and sacrifice put forth by these astronauts and by NASA, as representative of the entire nation, receive a musical treatment that tropes this style with *protagonistic introspection,* another "Copland sound" that can be traced to *Appalachian Spring.*

Finally, the opening and concluding sections of Copland's own 1959 ballet *Dance Panels* foreshadow Horner's troping of the exordium and introspection topics. The balance between these two styles here opens up a new expressive space, suggesting a nostalgic or wistful desire for heroism, or memory of triumphs now beyond reach.

Two "Copland Sounds" relevant to this presentation:

Triumphant Exordium: Call to attention, introduction of protagonist, evocation of communal purpose (e.g., patriotism, nationalism, humanism).

Slow tempo; monophony—usually brass solo/soli with percussion interjection; sostenuto, angular, disjunct melody; diatonic language with stress on triadic harmony; "bugleity" (Harrison 2016).

Examples: *Fanfare for the Common Man;* Symphony No. 3, opening of second movement; opening of *Emblems;* first, second, and last sections of *Dance Panels* (troped); first and last sections of *Quiet City* (troped).

Later Appropriations: James Horner, *Apollo 13* title music (turns to *protagonistic introspection* as it progresses); Randy Newman, home-run theme from *The Natural;* John Williams, opening fanfare from *Summon the Heroes.*

Protagonistic Introspection: Nostalgia, introversion, rumination, disillusionment.

Hymnody; stately melodic rhythm—either undifferentiated or aperiodic juxtapositions of long/short rhythms, potentially to the point of metrical ambiguity; slow tempo; emphasis of middle/lower registers; homophonic texture; woodwind solos and choirs.

Examples: Opening and closing sections of Symphony No. 3, I; *Lincoln Portrait*; conclusion to *Appalachian Spring;* "nostalgia" from *Quiet City;* Violin Sonata, II; central section of *Our Town* concert suite.

Later Appropriations: Rick Perry 2011 "Strong" ad; Marc Shaiman, "Decisions" from *The American President*; Mark Isham, "Travis Walton" from *Fire In the Sky;* Henry Jackman, "The Smithsonian" from *Captain America: The Winter Soldier.*

Other "Copland Sounds" commonly appropriated and troped include—but are not necessarily limited to—*Exuberant Country Dance* ("Hoe-down" from *Rodeo), Plodding Progress* (framing music of *Billy the Kid),* and *Idyllic Nature* ("Nature, the gentlest mother" from *Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson).*

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