



Upper Sixth Aural > Tonality

DEFINITIONS

Make sure you know the definitions of the following tonality/harmony related terms:

*Dissonant, Consonant, Diatonic, Chromatic, Major, Minor, Modal, Atonal,
Key centre, Modulation*

See also Teaching Resource A2/AURAL/SCALES.

EXERCISE 1

Listen to the first movement of Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*.

<http://naxosmusiclibrary.com/catalogue/item.asp?cid=CD93.183> / Track 8

1 Which of these words describes the tonality of this extract:

MAJOR MINOR MODAL BITONAL ATONAL

Look at the extract from the score and

- i) Describe the chord that is played four times by the whole orchestra between the beginning and figure 2.
- ii) Describe the scale played by the first piano three bars before figure 2.
- iii) Around what scale is the two bar piano figure based at figure 2.

2 Which of these words describes the harmony of the extract:

CHROMATIC CONSONANT DIATONIC DISSONANT

3 The text is taken from Psalm 39 (verses 12-13):

Exaudi orationem meam, Domine,
et deprecationem meam:
auribus percipe lacrimas meas.
Ne sileas, quoniam advena ego sum apud te:
et peregrinus, sicut omnes patres mei.
Remitte mihi, ut refrigerer priusquam abeam:
et amplius non ero.

*Hear my prayer, O God,
and my petition:*

hear my crying [with your ears].

*Do not keep silent, for I am a stranger in your home:
and a traveller, as were all my forebears.*

*Spare me, that I may recover before I depart:
and I shall do no more.*

- i) Explain how Stravinsky communicates the sense of the text through his music. Make sure your answer uses clearly explained technical, musical terminology.



EXERCISE 2

Listen to scene III ('Da kommt ein Licht') from *Erwartung* by Arnold Schoenberg.
<http://naxosmusiclibrary.com/catalogue/item.asp?cid=8.557527> / Track 10

1 Which of these words describes the tonality of this extract:

MAJOR MINOR MODAL BITONAL ATONAL

[1]

2 The plot of *Erwartung* can be summarised as follows:

A forest, at night. A woman is in an apprehensive state as she waits for her lover. In the darkness, she comes across what she first thinks is a body, but then determines to be a tree-trunk. She is frightened and becomes more anxious, as she cannot find the man she is looking for anywhere. She then finds a dead body, and sees that it is her lover, the man she has been waiting for. She calls out for assistance, but there is no response. She tries to revive him, and addresses him as if he were living, angrily charging him with being unfaithful to her. She then asks herself what she is to do with her life, as her lover is dead. *Wikipedia*

How does Schoenberg reflect fear and anxiety in his setting?

Make sure your answer uses clearly explained technical, musical terminology.

EXERCISE 3

Listen to the 'Summertime' from *Porgy & Bess* by George Gershwin.
<http://naxosmusiclibrary.com/catalogue/item.asp?cid=C51156> / Track 7

Look at the extract from the score, and answer the following questions:

1 What key is the extract in?

2 Describe as accurately as possible

i) the chord at beginning of bar 26.

ii) the alto part of the piano accompaniment in bar 30.

iii) the chord at bar 31, beat 4.

iii) the chord at bar 32, beat 4.

iv) the chord at bar 33, beat 1.

3 Why can the chord you identified in 2.iii) be described as a 'secondary dominant'?