

CONTEXT:

- Minimalism is a type of classical or 'art' music that developed in the 1960's
- It was a reaction against the atonal, complex 12 tone music that preceded it
- Minimalism was also a movement in other art forms such as art and literature
- Minimalist music is created from a limited number of simple ideas
- It features a lot of repetition and very gradual development of ideas
- Pieces are usually built around just one or two simple ostinati
- A range of particular composition techniques are often used to develop these ostinati, including addition, subtraction, augmentation, diminution and phase shifting.
- Many modern film and TV composers have been heavily influenced by the Minimalist movement, as have other well-known contemporary composers such as Einaudi and Yiruma.

VOCABULARY

MINIMALISM – a style of music created from a limited number of simple ideas

OSTINATO – a short, repeated musical idea

TEXTURE – layers in music

STRUCTURE – order of ideas

ADDITION – adding notes to an idea

SUBTRACTION – taking notes away from an idea

AUGMENTATION – making note lengths longer

DIMINUTION – making note lengths shorter

PHASE SHIFTING – repeatedly playing a slightly altered version of an idea simultaneously with the original to create a gradually evolving piece of music

FAMOUS COMPOSERS

PHILLIP GLASS

MICHAEL NYMAN

MIKE OLDFIELD

LUDOVICO EINAUDI

YIRUMA

5 Full ostinato with added bassline/open 5th chords

Am G

TUBULAR BELLS OSTINATO & CHORDS

9

F Em