TEMPERED CONFETTI: DEFINING INSTRUMENTAL COLLAGE MUSIC IN

TEMPERED CONFETTI AND VENNI, VIDDI, –

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This thesis explores collage music's formal elements in an attempt to better understand its various themes and apply them in a workable format. I explore the work of John Zorn; how time is perceived in acoustic collage music and the concept of "super tempo"; musical quotation and appropriation in acoustic collage music; the definition of acoustic collage music in relation to other acoustic collage works; and musical montages addressing the works of Charles Ives, Lucciano Berio, George Rochberg, and DJ Orange. The last part of this paper discusses the compositional process used in the works *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi,* – and how all issues of composing acoustic collage music are addressed therein.
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PART I
CRITICAL ANALYSIS
Chapter 1

Introduction

Endeavoring to simplify the character of collage as a visual art can be cumbersome due to the longevity of collage art’s history. The collage visual art form can be traced back to 200 BC China, though these early works likely did not influence our modern conception of collage works originating from Georges Braque.¹ Less than a century of influence and adaptation can still leave questions when approaching this art form: does one look to the more abstract works of Salvador Dalí for a model, or perhaps the literalism of Richard Hamilton? Moreover, when translating the visual art form to an aural one, how many of these ideas are necessary to translate?

Collage may be defined as a random assortment of materials onto a backing, or painting an image representative of that random assortment of materials.² The core element of collage is the random collection of images, which, if viewed from image to image, or on a micro-scale, may make little practical sense; but, if viewed all at once or on a macro-scale, reveals the painting’s inherent nature. Regardless of the artist – Dalí, Hamilton, or even Braque – this core element is present. From abstract to more representational art, the core connection to the art form is always apparent to the viewer.

Attempting to translate the nature of collage art into an aural experience presents a unique set of challenges. The benefit of collage as a visual phenomenon is its ability to be seen all at once. A viewer is not restricted in his viewing experience: he is not forced to view each piece of the work one part at a time and then reconstruct it in its entirety by memory alone. In fact, he would see the macro elements of the piece first, and then, if so inclined, study it in further detail. This is unlikely to be the case with an aural collage, which is temporally based.

Because of this temporal element, the listener will never have the ability to hear a piece of music all at once: all its sonorities, complexities, and interconnections played out discernibly in a singular moment. The listener will never be able to perceive the overall structure before the work is performed. While a composer could create program notes that provide a conceptual representation of the work, this would not convey a true understanding of the sonic representation of the work. Granted, while the listener could begin to grasp a macrostructure after multiple listenings, a successful musical collage work should not necessitate intense study to grasp its initial intent.3

In order to maintain faith in the collage medium, the listener is presented with a performance of fragments, each longer than a moment yet shorter than a complete idea, assembled in a seemingly random fashion with apparently no thought as to linear coherence or cohesion. This disorienting assembly of fragments can easily result in ambiguity, leaving the listener completely unable to grasp a grand scheme. In Picasso’s *Compotier avec fruits, violin et verre*4 the form is apparent and the themes readily appreciable. A viewer does not require a tremendous understanding of collage works in general, or even specifically the works of Picasso, to understand the theme of *Compotier avec fruits, violin et verre* (see Example 1). If a composer of collage music approaches the materials with too much obfuscation, the original nature of the art form – or at least the surface transparency – will be lost in translation.

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3 This is not to discount the necessity of studying a work thoroughly to grasp its intent, merely that the themes and styles should be readily appreciable in order to warrant such further study.

Therefore, in order to create an effective collage it is best to have a more direct approach to the method while maintaining a juxtaposition of intent from fragment to fragment. The fragments are meant to lack linear cohesion; they are perceived as mere random assortments of material, like composing many smaller works and then gluing them together in order to make a larger composition. This approach helps to guide the listener through the array of fragments by playing on their expectations, their nostalgia, and their sense of time, all while maintaining a lack of linear cohesion or hierarchical relationships. The juxtaposition of fragments may make seemingly little sense, but by utilizing similarities between these fragments, a composer can

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6 Linear cohesion in music is the ability for a listener to follow along directly with the work as is written, accomplished by basic tonal grouping structures (for reference see most tonal works composed prior to 1920 such as the works of Tchaikovsky or Mozart).
create a larger sense of structure. Even though the intent of hierarchy is absent, a listener will still impose a hierarchy based upon his aural experience, training, and cognitive efforts to understand a work of temporal art. When fragments of a similar nature occur, they will become mentally grouped with previous ones, and so on.⁷

By utilizing this more direct approach to composing collage music while juxtaposing the immediately adjacent fragments, we can begin to understand the apparent chaos inherent to this medium, and temper the collage work into something unique and substantial. In defining collage music — breaking it down to its basic elements and applying these in a sonic medium — we can develop useful tools for its construction. To this end, subsequent chapters of this essay will discuss the formal elements of acoustic collage music and the work of John Zorn; how time is perceived in acoustic collage music and the concept of “super tempo;” musical quotation and appropriation in acoustic collage music; the definition of acoustic collage music in relation to other acoustic collage works; and musical montages addressing the works of Charles Ives, Lucciano Berio, George Rochberg, and DJ Orange. The final chapter of this essay will discuss the compositional process of the author’s works Tempered Confetti and Venni, Viddi, – and how all issues of composing acoustic collage music in the previous chapters are addressed.

2.1 Defining a Fragment

In discussing collage music, we must begin by defining its key element, fragments: the content of a fragment, the arrangement of fragments, the hierarchy (or generally lack thereof) of fragments. Yet, what exactly is a fragment?

In literature, a fragment is generally a small, unfinished sentence, lacking some integral structure; in classical music the term motif is typically used to refer to musical fragments. However, a traditional motif is usually subject to further development, and not merely presented as seemingly incomplete musical ideas. So for the sake of clarity in this paper, the term “fragment” will be used to define a small section of a collage work that is not long enough to be considered a complete idea, yet containing within it some distinct gestural, melodic, and/or harmonic construction. It is possible for a motif to be contained within a fragment, but such a motif would likely never be repeated outside of the given fragment. While a fragment can come to a point of resolution, either harmonically or melodically, it does not function as a complete idea. Lastly, while it is possible for fragments to be played simultaneously or overlapped, this approach has not been found in John Zorn’s nor in the author’s collage works. To better understand why fragments are used in this manner, we will first explore the music of John Zorn.

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8 “Taken in its totality – a combination of melodic, rhythmic and harmonic elements – the motif is the building-block of polyphonic structures, the first and most important of which is theme. Theme and motif have usually been contrasted, theme being viewed as a self-contained idea, as opposed to the elemental, incomplete nature of the motif,” William Drabkin. "Motif." Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed June 14, 2016, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/19221.

9 The reason for fragments not sounding simultaneously or overlapping is the need for stylistic distinctiveness in order to maintain transparency in collage music. This is discussed in greater detail later on in the paper.
2.2 Fragments and John Zorn’s Collage Music

When exploring the fragments in the collage music of John Zorn – specifically *For Your Eyes Only* and *Cat O’ Nine Tails* – it is impossible not to notice each fragments’ discernible style, the lack of hierarchy among the many fragments, and the pervasive use of interruptions between them.

Each fragment has its own apparent style and definitive genre reference that immediately grabs the attention of the listener. For instance, measures 13 through 14 in *For Your Eyes Only*\(^\text{10}\) contains an unmistakable and very distinctive Gershwin-esque musical section (see Example 2); also, measures 51 through 54 of the same piece are reminiscent of Luciano Berio’s style (See Example 3).

\[\text{Example 1. Measure 13 – 14 of *For Your Eyes Only* by John Zorn}\]

\(^{10}\) Zorn, John. *For Your Eyes Only*. Hips Road, 1989.
These styles are distinct, obvious, and grab the listener’s attention amidst the chaos. This is more than mere pandering to the listener with recognizable styles; it almost single-handedly enables macro-cohesion: if instead the piece were a series of fragments of purely atonal and/or abstract, ambiguous motifs with no sense of progression or recognition, the entire piece would become overly ambiguous. An important part of collage as an art form is its ability to construct large structures out of smaller, not necessarily related, facets. Therefore, if a composer gives the

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1 Macro-cohesion in collage music is the overall connectivity of the work despite disparate fragments, which enables a listener to remain engaged by maintaining non-linear cohesion, stylistic distinctness, pervasive usage of disparate fragments, and sectional arrangements.
listener nothing to grab onto, they will lose all sense of a macrostructure. Just because linear cohesion in collage music is typically avoided does not imply the lack of an overall structure. These stylistic points of reference provide a sonic road map of distinct fragments for the listener to follow throughout the piece.\(^\text{12}\)

Importantly, though there is never a literal repetition of materials, there is a repetition of styles throughout all three of Zorn’s collage pieces. While not all styles recur within the work, the various jazz fragments perhaps stand out the most due to their frequent usage, particularly in *For Your Eyes Only*.\(^\text{13}\) Each successive jazz fragment will inform the next and so on, allowing the composer to build a composite structure as a result. A sense of hierarchy will be achieved as each jazz fragment attains more importance than the previous one. In addition to jazz references, Zorn’s *For Your Eyes Only* includes quotations of Carl Stalling’s cartoon music, and others.\(^\text{14}\) As a result of the varied materials and relative degrees of familiarity, the perception of the work will be unique to each listener.

2.3 Disjunct Fragments Used to Create Non-Linear Cohesion\(^\text{15}\)

In order to allow for multiple interpretations on the part of the listener, the most effective use of collage is one that avoids any sense of apparent hierarchy or linear cohesion. Zorn’s music uses fragments of similar lengths, drastically changes styles from fragment to fragment, varies fragments’ dynamics so they constantly shift between loud and soft, varies tempos, and alters the placement of fragments within the structure of the work itself. For instance, in *Cat O Nine Tails*

\(^\text{12}\) Even if the styles were not readily apparent to a listener as a result of their cultural or musical backgrounds, the similarities between various styles within each collage work would become apparent, leading to a similarly informed understanding of the piece.
\(^\text{13}\) Zorn, John. *For Your Eyes Only*. Hips Road, 1989.
\(^\text{15}\) Non-linear Cohesion is the interspersion of fragments that while not related by proximity are related by style.
measures 98 through 99, the performers are playing with extreme pressure near the bridge before suddenly shifting to a simple unison gesture (see Example 4).

Example 3. Measure 98 to 102 from *Cat O’ Nine Tails*.

In the opening measures (the “scrape” fragment) there is no discernible tempo, harmony, or melodic intent; the fragment is simply a noise gesture. Yet in the fragment immediately following it, there is a clear melody, harmony, and pulse. In the next fragment (mm. 99 to 101), Zorn suddenly shifts styles to a slow harmonic idea and continues on with an upward glissando-motion (see Example 4). By subverting the idea of linear progression, Zorn denies the listener the ability to connect adjacent fragments; instead, one must listen for more overarching connections, thus enabling the distinctive styles to emerge.

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2.4 Interruptions

By avoiding linear cohesion, however, Zorn is forced into using seemingly gratuitous interruptions. The polystylism of the various fragments – and abrupt shifts between them – almost compels a need for interruptions. When establishing musical syntax, almost any consistent usage of a technique will become aurally “acceptable” to the listener. If the syntax of a piece includes constant, abrupt interruptions, then the listener will likely come to expect such interruptions as part of the language of the piece. As discussed earlier, avoiding linear cohesion almost necessitates the use of jarring transitions between fragments.

However, that is not to say that smooth transitions are never used. A continuous barrage of unexpected events may fatigue the listener because this impedes the continuous flow of music and basic tonal grouping structures; yet incorporating unexpected events can create exciting moments and maintain interest in a work. In some works, this may be achieved by the use of an interruption, whereas in a collage work such a contrast may be achieved by a smooth transition between two disjunct fragments, thus undermining the expected interruption established by the prevailing syntax of the work. While this technique is not found in John Zorn’s collage works, it has been used in the author’s work, Tempered Confetti. For example, in measures 163 to 170 of this work, there is a surprise created by avoiding the pre-established syntax: in previous instances where a fragment ended suddenly, it was followed by a brief pause and proceeded with entirely new material; in this case, however, the music pauses for a duration of six seconds then resumes with an exact repetition of the previous materials before continuing (see Example 5).

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2.5 Macrostructure in Collage Music

As has been previously stated, the overall formal structure of collage works is an important aspect of their effectiveness. All three of John Zorn’s collage works under consideration here are in a loose ternary form. In all three works, the rate of change of the fragments, as well as the tempo, share an interesting feature. Approximately the first third of each work uses shorter fragments with relatively faster tempos, resulting in rapid changes between fragments. In the middle section of each work, the relative tempos slow down, often times resulting in an ambiguous or absent pulse; as a result, shifts between fragments begin to slow down as the fragments themselves are elongated. In the last third of each piece, the relative tempo of the fragments speeds up and fragments resume changing at a rapid pace; changes between fragments become even more pronounced and stark at this point. This trend is most
pronounced in *For Your Eyes Only*, due to the placement of rests that break up material and the reiteration and development of the opening material to start the final section (see Appendix A).\(^{18}\)

Chapter 3

Cognition in Collage Music

When linear cohesion is subverted, how is a sense of forward motion maintained? Perhaps more importantly, how does the listener perceive such motion? When there is a disparate arrangement of fragments, the idea of suspense and arrival — a very basic concept in traditional music — becomes obscured. It is necessary to consider the field of musical cognition to answer these questions succinctly and in a manner that best addresses the construction of collage music. As music cognition is a very broad field, this discussion will be restricted to how we perceive time as it occurs within collage music.

3.1 Linear Perception of Time in Collage Music

Collage music tends toward a linear perception of time, which is the more traditional method of organizing a piece of music. Since collage music consists of a series of disparate fragments, the length of these fragments — and their relationship to one another within the framework of the piece — will inevitably define our perception of time.

In all modern music, we are given the tools to form our own syntax of musical language. Within collage music, the harmonic and rhythmic languages easily become distorted beyond comprehension. In collage music, the sharp contrasts between adjacent fragments result in disjunction, while the method of change between fragments provides a certain level of predictability. Composing this type of music is comparable to walking a tight rope between

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transparency and ambiguity: if taken too far in either direction, the listener will lose interest. If
the composer is constantly introducing interruptions into a work, those interruptions become part
of the syntax upon which the musical foundation is built, giving the listener a sense of
predictability regardless of how distorted or disparate the fragments may become.

3.2 Super Tempo in Collage Music

Since time is perceived in collage music through the shift between fragments, the
composer can easily manipulate this aspect of time through the ordinal placement of these
fragments. For the sake of clarity, I have coined this idea super tempo: a tempo that is imposed
over the entirety of the piece regardless of the relative tempo of the fragments. If an event is
delayed for a lengthy period of time for example, the perception of time becomes suspended. On
the other hand, if events occur in rapid succession, the perception of time within the piece will
also speed up. Therefore, regardless of how fast or slow the tempo is at any given time, we
perceive time as being marked by when the events occur in relation to one another. (See Figure
1).

Figure 2, Super Tempo (ST) in Temper[ed Confetti]
In measure 163 of *Tempered Confetti*, the BPM is marked at 50, and as the fragment takes a lengthy amount of time to unfold, the overall perception of time is considerably slowed down. However, as the piece progresses, disparate fragments occur far more rapidly, resulting in an accelerando affect.

### 3.3 Vertical Time

The ultimate goal of vertical time within music is to lose a sense of self. Perception becomes nebulous as notable events fail to occur: animation ceases, a sense of progression is halted, and the music is suspended. An example of this effect is found in Edgard Varese’s *Octandre*. In collage music, it would perhaps be to the benefit of the composer to avoid a sense of vertical time.

In collage music, most of the conventions of music that enable a linear progression of time have been abandoned: elements are radically disparate, interruptions are frequent, and regular tonal and metric language is subverted. The only thread linking all of these drastically different elements is the relatively fast speed at which they change. If a fragment takes too long to unfold, the sense of time is suspended, and the overall perception of time will be altered. Suspending a fragment for an indefinite amount of time would halt any sense of progression and risk the ability to maintain the intent of the work.

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21 “Because the first movement of *Octandre* (1924) is non-developmental, a factor which contributes to its non-linearity, this piece presents the listener ‘not that collection of solid objects extended in space but the life that is lived in the scene that it composes.’ Musical themes do not transform into varied forms, rather they present themselves to the listener in different guises, as though observed from different angles through altering shades of light. They reveal themselves as multi-dimensional objects whose details are observed in no particular order not, as in the bulk of Western literature, as objects which develop in a single dimension from beginning to end.” Mahin, Bruce. “Non-Linear Temporal Constructs and the Loss of Self in Edgard Varese’s "Octandre," Jackson Pollocks "Lavender Mist," and Robert Penn Warren's "Being Here".” Southern Voices. Current Issues in Music, Vol. 1 (2007): 37-56. Date Accesses February 22, 2016. http://www.n-ism.org/Papers/graham_CIIM_2007.pdf
Once the sense of forward motion is suspended in collage music, it ceases to function as originally intended. For example, visualize a collage artwork of various, juxtaposed newspaper clippings; if all of the clippings are similar in size, then none of them will seem more important than the others, and they will all contribute to the greater whole. However, if one clipping is significantly larger than the rest, no matter how subdued, it will seem more important than the others. This problem is magnified significantly in music, due to its temporal nature. As previously discussed, we do not have the luxury of a grand overview of a piece of music beforehand. If a given fragment takes several minutes to unfold, while the rest are significantly shorter, that one fragment will assume prominence within the entire piece. Additionally, the form of the piece may become ambiguous, as it is unclear to the listener what the piece is trying to accomplish; in this case, having a clear goal when organizing radically different materials is of the utmost importance. If a composer were to attempt to create a “center” in order to suspend the listener’s sense of time, it is unlikely that the original momentum can be regained. In this instance, the music will slide toward complexity and is unlikely to recover.

Fragments, in essence, are incomplete ideas or thoughts that are relatively short. Any fragment suspended for too long and which has a definitive sense of conclusion ceases to be perceived as a fragment. Instead, it is likely to be interpreted as a phrase or section. If the composer had thirteen fragments of varied, but over a minute each, length it would undoubtedly sound like thirteen sections. In John Zorn’s *For Your Eye’s Only* there are eighty-eight distinct fragments in the approximately eleven-minute work. In *Tempered Confetti* there are thirty-seven distinct fragments in about twelve minutes. While these fragments are of various lengths, the changes between them were pervasive. While delaying a shift in fragments by a certain

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length of time can be an effective tool for creating a sense of suspense, the fragments must be equally weighted in order to deflect attention from any one moment.

This has been avoided in John Zorn’s work as well as the author’s works by constantly shifting between the fragments at a relentless pace. The longest fragment in either For Your Eyes Only or Cat O’ Nine Tails is a mere twenty-three seconds. Due to the consistent brevity of fragments, the listener begins to track time by the distance between occurrences of these events.\(^2\) In Tempered Confetti and Venni, Viddi —, the longest fragment is just under a minute. Essentially, the aural distinction between a fragment and a section is one of length. If a fragment lasts too long a listener will be more inclined to hear it as a complete section. This returns to the idea of linear grouping structures, where a listener breaks down music in a systematic method of “musical understanding” in order to structure the work in their mind.\(^2\)

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Chapter 4
Musical Quotation

4.1 Definition

From the Renaissance through the 21st century, musical appropriation has been a common technique used by composers. Most notably today, rap artists frequently “borrow” from one another. Among the issues concerning musical quotation, a composer must maintain an awareness of copyright law and fair use, a legal gray area with numerous pitfalls. Additionally, a composer could easily be accused of lacking originality if the musical quotations are used too frequently or are not incorporated effectively. However, there are enough benefits to musical quotation – and its application in collage music – to warrant its use in spite of these potential pitfalls.

4.2 Advantages to Using Quotation

Historically, composers’ tendency toward musical quotation is largely self-referential, as is particularly evident in the music of J.S. Bach and Robert Schumann. It is not until the romantic era that it became more common for composers to quote other composers. Ives’ *Three Places in New England* is probably one of the most well known examples of the composer’s pervasive use of quotation. This practice continues to the present day, where it is mostly practiced in the more popular music genres. The Australian group, The Axis of Awesome, effectively highlighted one of these borrowing practices in their *Four Chord Song*, demonstrating how many popular songs from the past few decades were based on the exact same chord structure, tempo, and rhythm.

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While composers use borrowed materials for various reasons, the use of quotation in *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi, –* is intended to elicit a comparative emotional response from the listener. Similarly, John Zorn quoted Carl Stalling in measures 76-78 in *For Your Eyes Only* to potentially elicit a sense of comedy and slapstick (see Example 6).  

Carl Stalling quoted Richard Wagner’s *Siegfried* in the Warner Brothers’ cartoon *What’s Opera, Doc?* in order to evoke the nostalgia of the listener. By including such a musical quotation in a collage work, a composer can enhance the listening experience.

![Example 5. Measures 76 – 78 of For Your Eyes Only. Carl Stalling quote.](image)

However, it is not a necessity to include these types of quotations. While musical quotations have been included in many of John Zorn’s musical collage works, as well as in *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi, –*, it is not an essential part of a collage work. What has

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been essential in these collage works is strong, distinct polystylism, an approach that provides non-linear cohesion as it denies basic linear tonal grouping structures.\textsuperscript{30} Quoting a composer’s work has the immediate benefit of not only referencing their particular style, but an entire genre as well. For instance in \textit{Venni, Viddi}, – there is a distinct quote of \textit{Eine Kleine Nachtmusik} from measure 142 to 148 which not only references Mozart in particular, but is immediately reminiscent of classical music as a genre. Musical quotation can potentially enhance the listening experience by capitalizing on familiarity with different styles or evoking different musical associations.

This distinct polystylism in collage music does not lend itself to multiple fragments sounding simultaneously and being easily distinguished as such. In this instance, fragments are short, distinct, incomplete ideas; thus, if two fragments of a similar style sound simultaneously, due to the relative brevity of the fragments, it is doubtful that the listener would be able to distinguish the fragments as separate from one another. If instead the fragments were of completely different styles – such as a tonal melody sounding simultaneously with an atonal melody – it would likely be heard as a single fragment: one that is stylistically distinct but ambiguous in intent. Since both \textit{Tempered Confetti} and \textit{Venni, Viddi}, – were composed of relatively brief fragments, clarity was sought over ambiguity by maintaining a clear sense of style rather than an ambiguous style resulting from unnecessary layering of fragments.


When a listener hears a piece he/she immediately begins to break down the piece into hierarchical structures from section down to phrase. Collage music, by denying even a phrase to appear in relation to anything immediately adjacent, denies basic tonal grouping structures.
4.3 Copyright and Fair Use\textsuperscript{31}

Even though the advantages to using musical quotation are attractive, the disadvantages can outweigh the advantages. There have been a few examples of copyright infringement lawsuits due to either intentional or unintentional quotations: for example, Hans Zimmer was sued by the Holst Foundation for copyright infringement in the movies \textit{Gladiator},\textsuperscript{32} and Plunderphonics has also suffered numerous copyright claims.\textsuperscript{33} The gray area of Fair Use opens up potential legal arguments that can only be resolved in a court of law due to a lack of established legal precedent. For this reason, a composer must carefully consider any quotations, and the relative merit of musical borrowing when quoting anything that would be legally defensible under fair use.\textsuperscript{34}

In collage works, it is advisable to refrain from quoting pieces that would require legal defense under Fair Use by quoting music within the public domain. Additionally, it is quite possible to stylistically mimic more modern composers without directly quoting them, thus sidestepping any legally compromising situations. Any piece written with musical quotations falling under Fair Use has the potential to result in a legal battle. The monetary cost of these legal battles can be quite significant, and the price of potential social fallout steep.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{31} https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/17/107
\textsuperscript{35} For further information on Fair Use, I refer you to an essay written by John Oswald at http://www.plunderphonics.com/xhtml/xplunder.html.
Chapter 5

Addressing Definitions

Now that the concepts of collage, cognition, and quotation have been explored, it is important to discuss other works that have been, perhaps erroneously, described as musical collage. Since definitions exist to give clarity and precision, it is important to avoid ambiguity by providing definitions that are overly broad or imprecise. This is easily demonstrated by the concept of melody: what a melody is and what is not in 20th century music when related to more tonal precursors. Jean-Jacques Nattiez put it aptly, stating: “If there are few theories of melody, it is perhaps because musicologists have suffered from vertigo upon realizing that melodic theory seems to dissolve into a theory of music as a whole.”

5.1 The Practice of Borrowing

As discussed in the previous chapter, the practice of borrowing has only increased over the years. However, the attribution of extensive borrowing and musical quotation as being a necessary component of—or synonymous with—collage is a matter that must be clarified.

Charles Ives is considered a pioneer of collage music for his various works utilizing extensive musical quotation. However in these works – for example, the second movement of *Three Places In New England*, the barn dance in *Washington’s Birthday*, the public holiday celebration in *The Fourth of July*, and the second and final movements of his Fourth Symphony – there is a pervasive element of linear cohesion. In review, collage music may be defined as the

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37 Nattiez,J.-J.979.'Melodia', in Enciclopedi (aTurin),vol.VIII

arrangement of polystylistic fragments that maintains non-linear cohesion in order to resemble an arrangement of fragments from multiple sources rather than one singular source, thus forcing the listener to draw on a larger macrostructure by association rather than relying upon the coherence of a microstructure. In Ives’ collage works, linear cohesion is maintained due to the lack of disjunct material. When there is consistent material, the aural disassociation from linear progression becomes nearly impossible to perceive. While a listener can draw a large-scale form from Ives’ collage works, it is not necessarily demanded of them by the work. In Ives’ works, the listener can gain as much from the microstructure as from the macrostructure; in John Zorn’s collage works, on the other hand, the microstructure is difficult to follow because the fragments are so disjunct.

Following on this thought, the third movement of Luciano Berio’s *Sinfonia* has also been defined as collage music, though Berio has resisted this association. His reasoning has merit, as Berio’s work is similar to that of Ives in this regard, in that there is a sense of linear progression in both. The third movement of *Sinfonia* uses the third movement of Mahler’s Second Symphony as a foundation, which is overlaid with extensive quotations and original material. Because of this referential underpinning, linear cohesion is maintained. Given the perspective of historical reference of the various works of Ives and Berio, these works fit closer to Berio’s own way of defining his *Sinfonia*: works with extensive musical quotations serving as historical references.

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5.2 George Rochberg’s Influence

George Rochberg has also composed two works associated with collage music: *Contra mortem et tempus* and *Music for the Magic Theater*.41 Both of these works utilize quotation from earlier composers, disjunct fragments, and non-linear cohesion, but neither includes distinct polystylism,42 as both pieces are consistent in syntax throughout. In fact, these works lend themselves more to moment form43 than to collage due to the shared tonal language of all fragments. Because there is a shared syntax, it is difficult to aurally distinguish adjacent fragments as being completely unrelated, which are thus perceived as more of an arrangement of distinct moments than fragments in the previously defined sense, due to the lack of perceivable styles lending to a macrostructure.

5.3 Musical Mashups and Montages

Musical montage is another concept often erroneously considered synonymous with collage. A musical montage, or a mashup, does not have the same structure as a collage work. In simplest terms, a musical collage is stricter in construction than a musical montage: whereas non-linear cohesion is a fundamental element of a collage, it is not required in a musical montage.44 *Hurts like a Teen Spirit* by DJ Orange is an excellent example of the differences

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between collage music and mashup. Orange’s use of linear cohesion and smooth transitions is pervasive throughout, and does not incorporate disjunct materials.

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Previously in this paper, the perceptions of the listener with regard to collage music have been explored; it is now time to consider the role of the composer in this process, since all of these ideas and cognitive possibilities of collage music, including its construction and relative merits, begin with the composer. This essay has presented a comparative analysis of John Zorn’s collage music, including the compositional process of the composer, and has explored how others perceive these works; this final chapter will be more self-reflective, exploring the author’s compositional process in the works *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi, –*, as well as how the previously discussed issues in collage music have been addressed from the perspective of the composer.

6.1 The Butter Tub as an Idea Generation Tool

In order to discuss the initial compositional process in *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi, –*, it is important to address the initial “idea generation tool.”\(^{46}\) The idea is to cut up several sheets of paper into many bits of confetti, and write down a word on each slip of paper. These slips of paper are then placed into an empty butter tub. Every day, the composer reaches into this tub and pulls out a slip of paper, and then composes on that idea for five minutes. This “idea generation tool” was the progenitor for a compositional process, the potential of which was fully realized after studying the collage music of John Zorn.

When listening to *For Your Eyes Only* for the first time, the possibilities for my own work became readily apparent, as I found the rapid change of ideas from moment to moment

with constant interruptions intriguing. The connection between the above-described idea
generation tool and composing collage music was made upon reading an interview with John
Zorn in *The Cartoon Music Book*. In this interview, Zorn discussed how he wrote all of his ideas
down on index cards for ease of organization into larger works later.\(^47\) Considering the small
amount of musical material that can fit on an index card, this method helped explain John Zorn’s
source of polystylism and fragment-based collage works. The similarity of this approach to the
aforementioned Butter Tub Process is clearly evident, and thus this idea generation tool became
the method for my own collage-based works.

6.2 Six Steps in Composing *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi, –*

However, this process required some revisions in order to be usable in composing collage
music. Firstly, because the five-minute time restriction seemed a bit too limiting, this was
lengthened to thirty minutes, thus allowing the fragments to form quickly and, in the case of
musical quotation, enable further exploration of quotation-based material prior to putting pen to
paper. Limiting oneself to a set amount of time allows the composer to write quickly and avoid
extraneous elements that could detract from a clear, focused fragment. As stated earlier, a clear,
distinct style is essential to a given fragment, enabling the listener to readily identify with it.
Time restrictions keep fragments terse and focused.

After all fragments were composed, revisions were made to ensure macro-cohesion
within the overall work. For example, the ending of the Tchaikovsky quotation in measures 83 to
85 first resolved in a tonally satisfactory conclusion (see Example 6).

Example 6. Piano reduction of measure 83 – 85 of *Tempered Confetti* pre-edits.

However, this caused a severe disconnect in the following fragment. In order to correct this, the Scream fragment entered on measure 85 interrupting the ending of the Tchaikovsky fragment (see Example 7).

Example 7. Piano reduction of measure 83 – 86 of *Tempered Confetti* post-edits.
Second, in order to generate fresh ideas, the number of fragments composed within a week were limited.\textsuperscript{48} Additionally, this allows ample time between sessions to explore new ideas or research quotations. For \textit{Tempered Confetti} and \textit{Venni, Viddi}, \textemdash, this number was generally five to seven distinct fragments per week, fluctuations occurring as a result of the time required to develop materials or allow for new ideas.

Third, the general desired length of every fragment and, thus, the desired length of \textit{Tempered Confetti} and \textit{Venni, Viddi}, \textemdash, was set before the fragments were composed. For instance, in \textit{Tempered Confetti}, the average length of the fragments was twenty-two seconds; this constraint gave a desired length for the fragments, allowing time to make additions as needed during the thirty-minute compositional process for each.

Fourth, at the beginning of the process the amount of quotation-based material was determined—for example, how many fragments would be quotations and which composers to quote—allowing for a balance between quotation and original material. In the case of \textit{Tempered Confetti}, the composers quoted were Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky, Haydn, Beethoven, Bruckner, Bach, Barber, and Grieg. Among these composers, Rachmaninoff is given a hierarchical preference, in that two quotations of his music occur at the beginning and end of the piece.

Fifth, maintaining the stylistic identity of each fragment in \textit{Tempered Confetti} and \textit{Venni, Viddi}, \textemdash, was considered paramount. Strict adherence to the style of each fragment, from pointillism to neo-romanticism, results in non-linear cohesion. Additionally, even though certain fragments are not direct musical quotations of other composers’ works, they may be reminiscent of other pieces due to their stylistic distinctiveness.

\textsuperscript{48} It was discovered there was a limit to the amount of stylistically distinct fragments could be composed each week before fragments began to sound too similar.
Lastly, in the compositional process of *Tempered Confetti* and *Veni, Viddi, –*, landmarks were set during the composition process in order to review and assess what fragments had been composed, and adjusted accordingly. Even though this process may seem haphazard, it was important to create a sense of balance. Therefore, in order to avoid any sense of linear hierarchy in *Tempered Confetti* and *Veni, Viddi, –*, all musical styles were given relatively equal representation. For instance, if the majority of fragments utilized were drawn from romantic music, the overall work would sound romantic and not polystylistic, regardless of how the fragments were arranged. In order to ensure a polystylistic result in *Tempered Confetti*, a tally was made once thirty-four fragments were composed (Figure 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Slow</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Fast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tonal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atonal</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3, Arrangement of Fragments for *Tempered Confetti*

These fragments were categorized by relative speed, tonal content, and duration. Once the various styles were catalogued and quotations had been utilized, another list was created to categorize styles and quotations that still needed to be composed in order to maintain a balance. While the first thirty-four fragments of *Tempered Confetti* were composed freely, the next thirty-four fragments were composed with the intent of maintaining non-linear cohesion. At the end of
the compositional process sixty-eight fragments were created (included in the figure above), of which thirty-six were utilized in the final version of the work.

6.3 Arranging the Fragments in *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi, –*

Composing the fragments is just the first half of this process, however. While the Butter Tub Process is effective at creating distinct polystylistic fragments, the arrangement of fragments is a considerable task, since an overarching form provides a collage piece with a clear intent. The first chapter addressed the overall design of John Zorn’s collage works, which lack linear cohesion but share a remarkably similar macrostructure. This is one of the elements borrowed from John Zorn and implemented in *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi, –*. The macrostructures of *Tempered Confetti, Venni, Viddi, –* and John Zorn’s collage works share a similarly loose ternary form. *Tempered Confetti*’s structure is as follows: the opening third is largely tonal and tends toward faster tempo fragments; the middle third is largely non-tonal and tends toward slower or more temporally ambiguous fragments; and the final third is a mix of tonal and non-tonal fragments, most of which tend towards faster tempos.
Figure 4, Macrostructure of *Tempered Confetti*

- **Initial Section**
  - Primarily tonal fragments of moderate tempo and length

- **Middle Section**
  - Primarily tonally and metrically ambiguous fragments
    - Flexatone Cadenza

- **Final Section**
  - Varied fragments comprising various lengths and content

- **Coda**
  - Conclusion fragments including Rachmaninoff quotation
This predetermined macrostructure enables the parsing of fragments according to their distinctive styles, resulting in a quick distribution of the fragments throughout *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi,* –. Additionally, the ternary nature allows the arrangement of fragments of similar styles in the beginning and ending sections of the piece. The obvious example would be the Rachmaninoff quotations, from Piano Concerto No. 2, at the beginning and end of *Tempered Confetti,* but there are others that are less distinct. For instance, the “Pop Tune” fragment at measure 35 (see Example 9) shares a stylistic tonal and genre similarity with the upbeat “Humorous” fragment at measure 196 (see Example 10).

![Example 8. Piano reduction of mm. 35 – 39 of *Tempered Confetti.* “Pop Tune” fragment.](image-url)

By separating these fragments so drastically a direct relationship is avoided while still enabling a sense of cohesion between beginning and end of the work. This creates an overarching form with recognizable quotations or styles, thus allowing the listener to connect the fragments throughout the work within a cohesive macrostructure.

In an effort to maintain non-linear cohesion, fragments were included in the three sections that contrasted with the prevailing styles of those sections. For example, in the middle section, which is largely atonal fragments, very tonal and traditional fragments were included, such as the “Fantasy” fragment from the pickup to measure 136 through 141 (see Appendix B). Interspersing fragments that were completely unrelated to their relative surroundings contributed to the polystylistic intent of the work. By interspersing styles throughout *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi, –*, the macrostructure and the transparency of the process were maintained.

However, even with the macrostructure clearly apparent, there were certain liberties taken in *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi, –*. Decisions regarding which fragments to interrupt, when to interrupt, how to interrupt, and the general arrangement of fragments in these
works were often based on intuition. While the general form was maintained, when the
arrangement of tonal or atonal fragments was perceived as becoming too overt, or if a section felt
imbalanced, adjustments were made accordingly. In this regard, the individual fragments were
tempered in order to create a convincing macrostructure: fragments were shortened or lengthened
slightly, their arrangement altered, or their harmonies changed throughout. Maintaining
flexibility throughout the process was an essential element in composing an effective acoustic
collage. Even though there was a specific process used in the composition *Tempered Confetti*
and *Venni, Viddi,* intuition and personal preference were always considered when arranging
fragments.

6.4 Influences on Musical Quotation

A personal aesthetic bias in *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi,* is clearly evident in
the composers quoted therein: Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky, Haydn, Beethoven, Bruckner, Bach,
Barber, Mozart, Bartok, Carter, and Grieg — composers that have been very influential to the
creation of these two collage works. In some ways, *Tempered Confetti* is an homage to these
composers, as they were sources of constant inspiration and had a significant impact on the
completed works. These composers were carefully considered throughout the compositional
process and their influences are readily apparent as quotations of their works are utilized
pervasively.
Chapter 7

Conclusion

It is hoped that this essay has shed some light on the concept of collage music, allowing such works to be more readily accessible and understandable. In breaking down collage music to its basic elements and exploring analytical approaches to such works, we have developed useful tools for both its analysis and composition. By applying these analytical tools to my own recent works as well as those of John Zorn and other composers, we can place these works in context and better understand the composer’s rationale for working in this genre. Further discussions of “super tempo,” musical quotation and appropriation in acoustic collage music, and the distinctions between collage and other related approaches such as montages have provided a workable analytical framework for the original compositions *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi, –*. Future works will allow for further exploration of these concepts; for instance, relating fragments by timbre or rhythmic components could bring about interesting cross-relations heretofore unexplored in *Tempered Confetti* and *Venni, Viddi, –*. Thus, while this essay explores much of what collage music has to offer, there are still more aspects of this genre that warrant further research and exploration.
very fast, wildly ($d = 184$)

\textit{vibraphone bars except down with one symbol in each hand.}

\textit{w/o}
References


Nattiez,J.-J1.979.'Melodia', in Enciclopedi (aTurin),vol.VIII.


PART II

MUSICAL SCORES
Tempered Confetti

Instrumentation

Piccolo
2 Flutes
Oboe
2 Clarinets in Bb
Bass Clarinet in Bb
2 Bassoons
Contrabassoon
4 Horns in F
4 Trumpets in Bb
2 Trombones
Bass Trombone
Tuba in C
Timpani
Percussion 1:
Flexatone
Bass Drum
Suspended Cymbal
Percussion 2:
German Crash Cymbals
Tambourine
Rain Stick
12 inch. Tom-tom
Percussion 3:
Tam-tam
Whip
Snare
Glockenspiel
Percussion 4:
12 in. Tom-tom
Triangle
Chimes
Piano
Strings

-although it may be very difficult to hold multiple mallets in the hand at once it is very important that percussion instruments be struck with the correct corresponding mallets (glockenspiel and triangle with metal; Bass Drum, Tam-tam, and Suspended Cymbal with soft mallets; Tom-tom and Snare with drum sticks; and Chimes with Hammer) unless otherwise noted.

-instruments are transposed as needed.
Venni, Viddi, –

For String Quartet

Performance Notes

On Tempo:

In the score is illustrated maximum performance tempo, however, it is understandable if this tempo cannot be achieved. The optimal performance of this work is cleanliness and clarity whenever possible while performing at an ideal tempo to illustrate this. Therefore, the lower tempo of 72 bpm should be considered to have a range of 64 – 72, and the higher end tempo of 128 – 144. The high end tempo should always be double of the low end tempo.

Approximate pitches, play pitches near notes indicated. Does not need to be relatively in tune, quarter tones are acceptable.