

Dear MUCP 5680 students:

For Monday, February 23 (note that the date in the syllabus has been changed), you are requested to write an essay of 3-5 concise and pithy pages concerning Synchronisms #9 for violin and tape by Mario Davidovsky. This work will be discussed in class this week by Dr. Jon Christopher Nelson.

In your essay, please present a clear and cogent point of view on one aspect of the piece, and support it by rational arguments based on reliable sources: the score and tape of the work, performance recordings, writings by or about the composer (duly footnoted), secondary literature (i.e. books and academic papers, again duly footnoted), and expert testimony (this may include comments by Dr. Nelson, which should be based on excellent notes but may be cited without footnotes).

A few possible areas of focus are suggested below, but you should feel free to devise your own:

- In what ways does the sound world of this piece differ from earlier Synchronisms, and to what degree may this be attributed to the technologies used in realizing the tape part?
- Davidovsky describes his Synchronisms as chamber music; what relationships does he create between violin and tape in this work, and how can they best be related to the practices of more traditional chamber music?
- Relate a particular set of rhetorical elements of this work (gestures, timbral types, harmonies, rhythmic structures, ...) to the work's construction on larger scales of time (possibly including the overall form of the work).
- Relate the aesthetic context implicit in this work to that of one or more other works in the repertoire (possibly Davidovsky's own). What novel territories or possibilities does Davidovsky set forth in this work?
- Compare the physicality of the violin gestures Davidovsky has written with the physicality implicit in the disembodied sounds of the tape. Does the tape imply a physical "character" (or characters - for example, other musicians and instruments)? If so, what sort of context does this create for the violin part?

Copies of the score and the tape part for this work may be downloaded from:

http://cemi.music.unt.edu/may/4680/Davidovsky_Synch_9_score.pdf

http://cemi.music.unt.edu/may/4680/Davidovsky_Synch_9_tape.aif

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Please let me know of any questions or concerns. I hope this will be a valuable and interesting project for you all!