




Spring term 2 musical appreciation

The Ostinato

In music, an **ostinato** comes from the Italian word for *stubborn*, (a bit like the English word *obstinate*). It is a motif or phrase that keeps repeating in the music – often on the same instrument and at the same pitch.

Week beginning	Value	Artist/ composer/ genre	
19.2.24	Compassion LENT	<p>Maurice Ravel: Bolero In the 1920s and 1930s Ravel was internationally regarded as France's greatest living composer. The Bolero is an orchestral piece. It has an ostinato throughout which is played on a snare drum. It is very hard for the player as they have to play the same rhythm over and over again, in time for the full 15 minutes of the piece of music.</p> <p>Sometimes the percussionist has to play it very softly and sometimes it has to get much louder to fit in with all the other instruments. It sounds like an easy thing to do to keep playing the same thing – but it takes a lot on concentration. In this video you can see the drumsticks tapping out the rhythm quietly to start the piece off. Can you hear it played all the way through?</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mb-SMTdzZ0</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">“Boléro” by Maurice Ravel 2 Bar Rhythmic Ostinato</p>

<p>26.2.24</p>	<p>Compassion</p>	<p>Olivia Rodrigo (born February 20, 2003) is an American singer-songwriter and actress. She first rose to prominence for starring in Disney tv programmes.</p> <p>Rodrigo released her debut single, Driver's Licence which broke various records and became one of the best-selling songs of 2021, helping her achieve mainstream fame.</p> <p>This piece of music has an ostinato which is played on one note on the piano throughout most of the song. It starts with a car beeping noise which the piano then picks up and plays on the same note.</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYpwyJAAuEY</p>
<p>4.3.24</p>	<p>Forgiveness St David's Day 1st</p>	<p>Both of these songs have an ostinato which is played on the bass guitar.</p> <p>"Under Pressure" is a song by the British rock band Queen and singer David Bowie. We have listened to this song before but we are listening to it again as it has such a catchy ostinato.</p> <p>It was written by the band and David one day when they were together. Freddie said "We were fooling around and then just sort of jamming with tracks and suddenly we said 'why don't we just see what we can do on the spur of the moment?'"</p> <p>The song is now considered one of the greatest collaborations of all time.</p> <p>The song reached number one on the UK singles chart, becoming Queen's second number-one hit in their home country and Bowie's third, and also charted in the top 10 in more than 10 countries around the world.</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HglA72ogPCE</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYOWxgSXdEE</p>

		<p>Unfortunately, they never actually performed the song live together. This video is edited together to show them both singing the song.</p> <p>Another one bites the dust is a song by Queen. The song is credited as Queen's best-selling single, with sales of over 7 million copies.</p>	
<p>11.3.24</p>	<p>Forgiveness British science week</p>	<p>Gustav Holst – Mars the Bringer of War from ‘The Planets’ Mars is the first movement of The Planets and it is an intense piece of music. The piece is in 5/4 – it is quite unusual for works to be written with 5 beats in a bar, the piece can still make us feel unsteady, particularly with its march-like feel. The 5 beats are emphasised by a repeated figure or ostinato, which begins on one of the timpani, the strings and the two harps.</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXOanvv4pIU</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>“Mars” by Gustav Holst Rhythmic Ostinato</p>  </div>
<p>18.3.24</p>	<p>Forgiveness St Patrick’s day - 17th EASTER WEEK</p>	<p>Pachelbel: ‘Canon in D’ Johann Pachelbel (1653– 1706) was a German composer, organist, and teacher. He wrote music in the Baroque era. His ‘Canon in D’ is a famous piece of music often played in adverts and in films and at weddings! This piece of music has an ostinato that is played on the bass line (the lowest instrument or group of instruments). This is often called the ‘basso continuo’. It is played over 2 bars (8 notes) and is repeated throughout.</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvNQLJ1_HQ0</p> <p>Here’s the pattern:</p> 

		<p>The 'tune' played on the higher pitched instruments is called the melody. In a canon, the melody is often repeated on other instruments and sometimes it is changed around a bit with extra notes and patterns. This is called a variation on the melody.</p>	
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