

## The Second Concert Report: Modified for Life in the Time of COVID-19

In lieu of attending an actual concert, I would like you to compare recordings of **three** different versions of a **single** piece of music: Johann Sebastian Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565. Three particularly interesting versions which you might focus on are:

- Bach's original version, for organ, as performed by Karl Richter: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98w25S5yASc>
- Leopold Stokowski's transcription for orchestra, as performed by the Czech Philharmonic: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=idNJALp6n0U>
- Fred Mills's transcription for brass quintet, as performed by the Canadian Brass: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_Cst9lV5PPg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Cst9lV5PPg)

Should you wish to include different recordings, that may be acceptable, but if so, you **must** consult me first to make sure that what you would be considering would do. (The recordings I included links to all have video of the actual performance; if you want to challenge yourself, consider substituting an audio-only recording; I reiterate that you must have this approved by me if you choose to do so.)

The report should be approximately 3–4 pages (900–1100 words), formatted as following: twelve-point Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, double spaced. Please submit as either a .doc or .pdf file. Note the genre of music performed, give analyses of it using the technical language we've learned in class, give some commentary on the concert setting and the behaviors of both audience and performers, and reflect on how listening to music live differs from listening to a recording. Try to connect what you see to issues and music we have discussed in class. Also, try to reflect on the presence and use of the television camera and any editing you notice.

The second concert report is due by the start of class on **Thursday, May 14**. If this poses any problems for you with regard to the current situation (if you have trouble getting internet access, if you get sick, etc.) please let me know and I will try to work with you.

Grading will be based on the following:

- 50%: Thoughtful attempt to critically engage with the music and the concert experience; use of concrete detail in description of events, environs, and behavior.
- 30%: Correct usage of technical vocabulary used in class and making connections back to issues discussed in class.
- 20%: Clear organization of ideas and correct formal English usage: grammar, syntax, diction, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, etc.

Please focus on reporting what you see and hear in the concerts. Reporting external information on the composer, the piece, the ensemble, or anything else that you have read elsewhere will not contribute to your overall grade unless you can directly demonstrate that it affected your listening experience. Any such information you do choose to include should be properly cited.



Here are some guiding questions to think about during the assignment that might help shape your report (there is no need to comprehensively deal with all of these, or to limit yourself to them; these are just suggestions to give you ideas).

- Try to describe the actual piece of music in as much detail as you can: What sort of textures did it use? Were there prominent contrasts of dynamics, tempo, register, instrumentation, mode, etc.? Were there broader continuities?
- Try to describe any differences you noticed in the different versions, including aspects of the performances. Which parameters varied from version to version, and which remained the same? How much variation was there?
- How do the different venues and environments of the performances contribute to the overall effect? How would the experience be different if the venues were larger or smaller, or differently shaped? Do you notice anything special about the acoustics of the venues? How is it different from listening to a recording by yourself?
- Think about the behavior of the audience (if there is one in the video). What do you think they expect to get out of the experience? What sort of demographic do they occupy? How do they show appreciation for the performance? What sort of etiquette is at play? How is this similar to or different from other types of performances (like a play, or a concert of a different tradition)? Is there anyone breaking that etiquette? How does seeing other listeners impact your own listening?
- Was it a worthwhile experience? Are there changes that, in your opinion, would make it better? If so, why do you think things are the way they are?
- What is the effect of recording this piece? How does the presence of cameras and microphones affect what is said and performed? How does the editing of the video and audio contribute to the final product? How does the experience of seeing this on a television or computer screen compare to what it might have been like live?