

The Haunted House

My intention with this composition was to create a soundtrack to a walk through a haunted house. It is in the style of Serialism which is a method of composition using a set series of pitches – these are then manipulated through transposition, inversion, retrograde and retrograde inversion as well as being varied through rhythms, articulations, dynamics and timbres. Serialism started primarily with Arnold Schoenberg's twelve-tone techniques: it orders the twelve notes of the chromatic scale forming a row or series and providing a non-traditional unifying basis for a composition.

I intended to create a sense of fear at the start to signify the reluctance to enter a haunted house that you know could be dangerous. I did this by using a slow tempo alongside Klangfarbenmelodie technique between the horn and trumpet, also seen in Pierre Boulez's *Le Marteau sans maître*. The use of high screeching notes on the clarinets sends shivers down your spine, similar to the shrieking violins used by Bernard Hermann in *Psycho*, *The Murder Scene*.

The next section is a Fugal exposition similar to the first chorus of Bach's *Ein Feste Burg Ist Unser Gott*. It is written 7/8 and has a 1/4 bar every third bar (the notes in these bars are accented to create a sense of pulse). The contrasting sections of the fugue overlap which builds tension and conveys a feeling of chaos and anxiety similar to Stravinsky who in *Rites of Spring* uses collage textures to build up and create a feeling of utter chaos.

Following is a Waltz-like section, which uses a very simple repeating melody which then transposes to another tone row. The main melody is played once on its own with a simple waltz accompaniment before the other instruments join in with simple repeating countermelodies which are passed around the woodwind. They include descending lyrical figures as well as staccato figures which create contrast. Occasionally through this section, there are some 5/8 bars which metrically displace it, giving it an interrupted feel (as if someone is taking the soul of the person who is dancing the waltz). Metrical Displacement is seen in Danny Elfman's *Batman* in the Batman theme where he changes the emphasis on individual notes in the inner melody by having it start at different places of the bar, thereby creating an unpredictable soundscape.

The next section starts with a bassoon ostinato which is then doubled by the cello before the trumpet and horn start to play the main melody of this section in dialogue (which represents the people in the haunted house having a conversation to see whether they should continue further). While this is happening there is also fragments of the waltz motif being played as a unifying device (as if you can still hear the waltz in the distance). This section builds from a single bassoon to full orchestration at the end of the section. Each of the different parts play different countermelodies over the main tune to create a collage effect similar to Charles Ives' *Putnam's Camp* as well as the use of cross rhythms which further emphasises the feeling of chaos.

Once all the instruments have joined there is an 8-bar tutti section where they are playing in complete unison which creates a sense of stability to the music (but to signify that they have

found a door and opened it to find a group of zombies). A stark contrast to the previous sections which give of a feeling of panic and chaos.

The bassoon ostinato returns with many instruments using Klangfarbenmelodie technique over the top to bring back the feel of disorder and mania (as the people run back down the corridor to the front door of the haunted house). Whilst also contrasting the tone colour of each note in a similar way to Webern's *Symphony opus 21* which uses Klangfarbenmelodie over a more sustained bass. While the Xylophone plays an unnerving melodic line to enhance the overall feel of the section.

To create a final sense of chaos some of the main melodic lines return including the melody from the waltz section, the bassoon ostinato, both of the melodies from the tutti section and the subject from the fugue. These melodies start playing and some of them start again to allow for the waltz tune (which has been used a unifying device throughout the piece) to play full through. This is as if the people are running back past all the places they passed on their journey through the haunted house.

As they get closer to the exit and the Zombies get closer to them the tutti section returns to bring back a final sense of unity which then becomes fragmented on most parts in the last 5 bars leading up to the final bar except the horn and trumpet which plays through to the end. Before one final unison note to round of the piece, as they reach the door and ...

	I ₀	I ₁	I ₂	I ₆	I ₁₀	I ₇	I ₁₁	I ₄	I ₈	I ₉	I ₃	I ₅	
P ₀	D \flat	D	E \flat	G	B	A \flat	C	F	A	B \flat	E	G \flat	R ₀
P ₁₁	C	D \flat	D	G \flat	B \flat	G	B	E	A \flat	A	E \flat	F	R ₁₁
P ₁₀	B	C	D \flat	F	A	G \flat	B \flat	E \flat	G	A \flat	D	E	R ₁₀
P ₆	G	A \flat	A	D \flat	F	D	G \flat	B	E \flat	E	B \flat	C	R ₆
P ₂	E \flat	E	F	A	D \flat	B \flat	D	G	B	C	G \flat	A \flat	R ₂
P ₅	G \flat	G	A \flat	C	E	D \flat	F	B \flat	D	E \flat	A	B	R ₅
P ₁	D	E \flat	E	A \flat	C	A	D \flat	G \flat	B \flat	B	F	G	R ₁
P ₈	A	B \flat	B	E \flat	G	E	A \flat	D \flat	F	G \flat	C	D	R ₈
P ₄	F	G \flat	G	B	E \flat	C	E	A	D \flat	D	A \flat	B \flat	R ₄
P ₃	E	F	G \flat	B \flat	D	B	E \flat	A \flat	C	D \flat	G	A	R ₃
P ₉	B \flat	B	C	E	A \flat	F	A	D	G \flat	G	D \flat	E \flat	R ₉
P ₇	A \flat	A	B \flat	D	G \flat	E \flat	G	C	E	F	B	D \flat	R ₇
	RI ₀	RI ₁	RI ₂	RI ₆	RI ₁₀	RI ₇	RI ₁₁	RI ₄	RI ₈	RI ₉	RI ₃	RI ₅	