Aural Skills III – Final Project

In lieu of a final dictation quiz, you will design your own final project. This will be a dictation-based project similar to a long Music By Ear assignment.

1. **Repertoire.** Select a film cue (of your choice) that engages with some of the chromatic harmony we’ve been discussing in class. A film cue is a short section of a film score (usually about two minutes). You can find all sorts of these on YouTube—I recommend searching for a composer or film that you like and listening to a bunch of clips until you find something that inspires you. Some suggestions:
   a. John Williams – e.g. *Star Wars, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* or *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, Home Alone, E.T., Hook, Jurassic Park,* and many others
   b. Howard Shore – e.g. *The Lord of the Rings, The Hobbit*
   c. John Powell – *How to Train Your Dragon* (this soundtrack is amazing)
   d. Danny Elfman – e.g. *Edward Scissorhands, The Nightmare Before Christmas, Tim Burton’s Alice in Wonderland*

2. **Written assignment.** Design an assignment for yourself that will challenge but not frustrate you. Your assignment should include a substantial written component, but need not address the entire excerpt. A good assignment will play to your strengths but also push you to excel at something you’re struggling with. Include at least two of the following tasks:
   a. Transcribe the melody
   b. Transcribe one or more countermelodies
   c. Create a map of the tonal plan of the piece (key areas and cadences)
   d. Transcribe the bass line and work out some or all of the harmony
   e. Transcribe a melody for a transposing instrument
   f. Transcribe a complicated rhythmic or metrical pattern, involving unequal meters (like 5/8 and 7/8), mixed meters, metric modulation, or polyrhythms

3. **Performance assignment.** Design a task based on your excerpt that you will perform for me at your final appointment (December 17–19). Some examples:
   a. Sing the transcribed melody from memory on scale degrees and solfege
   b. Conduct difficult metrical passages along with the recording
   c. Play the harmonic progression at the piano (or just the bass line) while arpeggiating the harmonies

You will submit a proposal to me via Blackboard by Tuesday, November 26. Your proposal should include the following:

1. A link to a recording of your film cue, including specific timings if it is part of a long recording.
2. A description of the written assignment you have designed for yourself.
3. A description of the performance assignment you have designed for yourself.

If necessary, I will let you know if you need to revise your proposal. I will ask you to revise your proposal if your film cue seems too easy or if your written or performance assignment doesn’t address issues that we’ve been working on this semester.

**Deadlines:**
- Proposals Due (via Blackboard assignments module): **Tuesday, November 26**
- Revised Proposals Due (if necessary): **Friday, December 6**
- Written Project Draft Due (optional): **Thursday, December 12** (last day of class)
- Written Projects Due at your final appointment: **December 17–19**