

TRANSFIGURATION

+ PROCESS/EXAMPLES

SUMMARY

The concept and associated strategies for elevating material and works toward profundity and genius. Originally conceived jointly with counterintuition as the “transfigured counterintuitive” to rescue cliché: “to resurrect sincerity from previous/preexisting genres/styles/ideas, one must reinterpret with a unforeseen and higher intent”. Over time, this drive toward genius overtook the entirety of Ideas Original, now the whole of I.O. can be said to foster transfiguration - culminating in the genius documents and NS.

In counterintuition, transfiguration can rescue any quality of material through “examination/“due process”/masterful treatment through understanding”, bringing it into a profound domain. Also, “developing the underdeveloped”, ambiguity and strange poetry strategies (bringing out “unique” beauty), “axiomatic ___”, treating a subject with high seriousness (“classical intent”), reinterpretation (refraction), and including material in a larger/higher context. Orchestration plays a significant role, through transfiguration ensembles and introverted transfiguration. Certain orientations in transfig theory are rarely seen in genre, and if used together, would transcend genre’s format limits.

Variation set is the most direct exhibition of the transfiguring potential of genius - in Beethoven’s Diabelli Variations, he elevates common, banal material to its highest ends through a myriad of approaches - virtuosity, solemnity, dissonance, fugue, parody, counterintuition, breadth of emotion, and ultimately through his own radical idiom.

NS is the “profound domain” due to its transubstantiation/reification principle - music is “forced” to represent profound concepts, and if Ideas Original is understood as a process that every piece of material included in NS must be subject to/derived from, transfiguration is implicit. “Theoretical possibilities” and almost all NS features (IP constituents) are “transfiguration strategies.”

Generalization/New Style significance:

New Style significance:

NS is the “profound domain”, elevating material to highest ends

Through transubstantiation, reification, and artist insistence, music is “forced” to represent profound concepts
...profundity itself is stretched to its limits through barriers, BPC, questioning etc.

If I.O. is understood as a process that every piece of material included in NS must be subject to, transfig is key

I.O.’s highest (conventional) purpose is to transfigure works, and at a smaller scale, musical material
“Mandatory transfig techniques”

Transfiguration strategies seen in NS objects are pervasive - transfiguration strategies have come to dominate NS:

Larger context: NS is the largest context - subject domain acts as a “larger context”

(as do the variation sets and language expositions)

= ‘Automatic gravitas’

The genius and genius task doc is an even higher manifestation of transfiguration doc, as well as “blinding genius” goal

Extremes/barriers ambiguity theory wit/humor context

variation/developing variation, “reinterpretation”

“make more universal” and “anthological” goals: = a precursor to generalization

mature style

transfig/unified ensembles = precursor to the “tone edit” concept

Generalization:

Generalization: all strategies able to elevate a work, as evaluated in retrospect based on their contribution to the work

(including those not listed here, or undiscovered, future-born, etc.)

“all alternatives/strategies explored” - theoretical, described and physical: transfig processes “given infinite time”

Physically, these strategies elevate rendered music beyond comparison with everything but the very highest genre music (if that)

Certain orientations in transfig theory are rarely seen in genre, *and if used together, would transcend genre’s format limits*

Think: results “investigatory orientation” as a result of I.O. processes, seen in retrospect - just the natural full use of

I.O. creates alien forms (see “mature” and late style - we must accept the implications of I.O. results)

(implies restraining the predeterminist impulse)

+ Negative generalization: no...

TRANSFIGURATION

To resurrect sincerity from previous/preexisting genres/styles/ideas, one must reinterpret with a higher intent
 To take 'normal' material and/or works and make them unique/outstanding - toward "shining character", vs. something too "clichéd/normal"
 Everything in a composition can be transfigured (go through the whole composition, take inventory)
 Transfiguration:
 Bring an idea into the profound domain through examination/"due process"/masterful treatment through understanding
 Through counterintuition, bringing out unique beauty
 treating a subject with high seriousness:
 Classical/serious intent creates/fosters serious contexts for the work, prompting serious consideration by others
 transfiguration as taking a small part/idea (relatively undeveloped) of a composition and amplifying to a central part, then exalting
 "oh dr. jesus" – Gershwin: one phrase in the opera used as central repeated figure in Gil/Miles version, swells to epic climax

Transfiguration
 ...Of the commonplace: Glorification, emergence after being put through struggle (rebirth), allegorical/universal
 Spotighting/exploring the for granted/popular/vulgar/ordinary
 Theme, work of art, instrument, concept, object, idea, person/lifestyle, action/everyday, story
 ...of a "people's" genre: a simple, popular genre considered/interpreted by a high artist
 Classical Intent: Find the classical intent in a piece
 Increase depth, sensitivity, complexity, scale etc.
 Use of high beauty in a work of low/unrefined expectations (pop music etc.)
 Reinterpretation: variations on the well known - update, elevate, radicalize elements of original work
 ...Of the archaic: Resurrect the disproved, rejected, out-of-fashion/style, old-fashioned and use it as a main theme/subject
 State the 'Obvious': One sees the obviousness of something only after it is pointed out
 Complex Emotion: Juxtaposed emotions of subtle grades (the unexplainable) - see ambiguity theory

When done to existing objects: mature style, placeholder theory, aesthetic benchmarking, collage

See: [Ambiguity theory](#): many/most ambiguity theory ideas are from in the general impulse of counterintuition and transfiguration.

Due Process: Bring an idea into the profound domain through examination/"due process"/masterful treatment through understanding
 examine systematically all possibilities, meaning and associations in material

Lend high seriousness/passion to subject

Classical/serious intent creates/fosters serious contexts for the work, prompting serious consideration by others
 instrumental art music vs. song (Very Good Year)

Concept-Level: unique idea, levels of obviousness, artist strategies etc.

Better Interpretation: assumes there are *better* interpretations

better artist, musicians, conductor etc.

better choices (tempo choices, ability to maintain coherence/long line, ability to connect with audience, maintain tension)

better melodic choices (improvisation, interpretation) solo musician choices

more passion, energy

timbre/orchestration differences ("best timbre")

Performance Amplification/Better Performance: certain performance/context significance

(moment in/culmination of artist's/performer's life, social/world event etc.)

attire/atmosphere/appearance

location of performance

Counterintuition: bring out unique dimension of beauty that isn't expected, challenge traditional/clichéd ideas of beauty

Remove cliché's/common ideas and replace/renovate them

Foreign element/style: a certain element of work is colored by a style foreign to the main aesthetic (leaves many aspects of unity)

Type of harmony

lyric vernacular

subject

type of melody

orchestration or ensemble

type of rhythm

Anachronism

Ambiguity Theory/Process: "edge" of control, mystery = depth

Form:

Use modern forms, invented forms (non-musical form, general form)

forms associated with high seriousness (symphony, concerto/sonata, opera, variations, quartet etc.)

turning point, single climax etc.

Make more universal

Increase scope (wider/epic): a broader conception of the world/human emotion (the profound)

See: [barriers](#)

Increase dynamic range: lower lows, heighten highs

Increase range of action: Increase range of action in a composition:

(slower parts slower = note values larger, and faster parts faster = note values smaller)

Whole notes/less create a greater slowness to build climaxes from 32nd+ figures enliven climaxes, create greater action
 “Worlds” of interpretation (sections of large scale works with their own traits, new worlds with variations of emotion of original)
 Increase size of ensemble
 Increase length

Anthology: Showcase all possibilities of a certain style within a work

Reference/quote/benchmark other works relevant to topic, enriching original material with more meaning

Extension of line of material: combining developments into one long line holistic directionality
 Modulation schemes

Climax: build to climax more effectively, or to bigger climax, define climax points better

Make more edgy, “modern”

Transgressive/ugly playing – screams, scrapes, wails, growls, harshness, raspy/hard textures (counterintuitive to classical ideals)
 Add dissonance (difficulty, conflict)
 extension of “false relations” idea: unreconciled/uncorrected dissonance as justified by larger context

Audacity

Exaggeration: emphasize archetypes and strengthen/enlarge these symbols

Exaggerate genre archetypes, or prominent/distinctive features of genre

Introverted Transfiguration: add detail (give brain more to process, make more vocal-like)

“expressive language” - add expressivity to lines/interaction: vibrato, slurs, articulation, dynamic differences/swells, ornamentation
 Orchestral variance

Complexity Standards: add complexity

Approach polyphonically (fugal/canon, inner voice movement, more countermelody, more character in lines)
 Virtuosity

Understatement:

Distill: Focus on brevity/editing in relation to importance, transition etc., economy,

Eschew obviousness: don't say anything more than you need to, don't spoon-feed listener, brevity

Expand on a harmonic skeleton

Fragment/isolate most meaningful parts and expand

Decrease Ensemble: uncomfortably intimate/candid, personal
 soloist, monochromaticism

Personalize/Particularize: Make more personal: submit the material to idiosyncratic, personal language (mannerism)

Make more sensitive, urbane (no obviousness, showiness, glossiness, “professionalism”)

Humanize: reduce archetypes by exploring reality/ambiguify concerning them (humanize them, show them as they are)

“classicize” pop/jazz progressions with voice leading

Wit, humor and parody/satire of original material (humor in high seriousness) = a more accurate picture of life (high comedy, ironic comedy)

Transfiguration Ensembles:

Transfiguration when applied to orchestration - a “recognizable instrumental aesthetic” with an external rationale - either monochromatic, having some perceived unity, is historically referential, or plural/anthological. Through “table of the elements” it is taken farther: pure sine waves are the basic/neutral material, then monochromatic ensembles represent elements, progressing to compounds and eventually toward the total set. These ensembles are somewhat archetypal, while “unique timbre” takes the opposite track - transfiguration through particularization/individuality, and “diversified monochromaticism” envisions shades within a unified ensemble.

see: “transfiguration”, “introverted transfiguration”, “monochromatic ensembles”, “diversified monochromaticism”

Move ‘lead melody’ away from one instrument/line (fragment, distribute)

Classical melody comes from interactions of instruments/counterpoint/devices and detail, not necessarily from one “lead melody”
 virtuosic, complex, fast/action-oriented passages, fast figures, interaction of several instruments, solo/tutti, layering etc.

Magnification: taking a small part/idea (relatively undeveloped) of a composition and amplifying to a central part, then exalting

(“oh dr. jesus” – Gershwin: one phrase in the opera used as central repeated figure in Gil/Miles version, swells to epic climax)

Visual Aesthetic: visuals associated with the music

cinema, music video, performance aspects, even historic events

Speed (fast tempo) is transfigured by:

“edge” of control feel	eventfulness	modularity/frequent switches	irregular/unpredictable detail
build/directionality	range juxtaposition	polymeter	
complex rhythmic layering (Sinnerman)	virtuoso solo work		

a different character melody (broad, languorous, etc.)
see: Jeux

stab axioms, chord stabs

pad chord

Transfiguration of Literal Repetition:

Sufficient character of repeating material (life - timbre, melodic, harmonic)
Intensification/build/supersede (Danse of Earth)
Displaced accents, unexpected events
Quality of events over it
Preparatory role of next event (Rite, minimalism) - literal repetition to prepare major change (false sense)
Alternation of instruments (Petrouchka)
Completely objective/unchanged
Addition of changing harmonies
Intensification with percussion
Intensification with smaller motifs, or closer together

Transfiguration of Riff:

Complex riff, not "4 notes" improvisation/expanded riff (still played in unison but developed)
 Polymeter Character
Harmonization of riff (1983)

TRANSFIGURATION PROCESSES

How artists made a profound work from a “reference point” of other works and aesthetics

What are the references? a genre, a loop, a piece of musical material (treat the musical material like someone else’s)

Metaphoric *bridge*: why is it like the reference? how does the piece connect itself to the reference?

(see psychological variation, metaphoric insistence)

Variation of someone else’s material has more cultural/extramusical implications than your own

Universals: intention change, counterintuition, through-composition, humanization, inventive orchestration/ensemble, “variation” orientation, psychological variation/metaphoric insistence, scale/scope change (expansion/abbreviation), range/breadth of emotion, ambiguity, intellectualism, presence of unique axiom

“**introverted transfiguration**” From existing/appropriation objects into higher/advanced/“modern” forms (yours or those of others)

Will help translate other music into a new style - “interpret it”

Will help bridge pop/beats to show more modern ideas (solos, basslines, orchestration, etc.)

Extended technique, axioms, incoherence theory, etc. + The old introverted transfig ideas

Complication of harmony (veiling, modern classical, jazz etc.)

Emphasis on complexity and modernism

Transfigurations of timbre: to transform typical timbres into ‘high-art’ (or find ‘high art’ versions of them)

FX on them, EQ etc. “sinewy”, etc.

Dictionary of timbres (should be 1000’s)

Primarily “hard” textures? (like hard, low chords just barely implying the progression)

Reverb types (or not) Room sounds “Live sound”

Transformations:

the logical transformations of melodies from certain places

see also: transfiguration strategies

where they dissolve and/or have to fundamentally change

especially good for motifs in pop songs or pop/song *form*

Full Objects List: a pop melody can serve as any one of the objects? (if transformed properly)

factors:

rhythmic/phrase value (any disparate, dramatic music can use phrasing - atonal/serialism needs rhythmic phrase)

breaking 4/4, fermata in many higher genres “squaring” for classicism (w/o swing) jazz (swing)

more articulated phrases (joining harmony and melody, killing “homophonic” nature of pop)

axiom (immerse in axiom)

idiom (genre/cultural styles)

harmony (some genres will require reharmonization)

some pop progressions won’t sound “classical” without a substitution or correct leading

development (Beethoven would require an extension of a loop over multiple keys into longer phrase, for instance)

illustration:

Bruno Mars > 50’s ballad > Sondheim > Chopin/Mozart/Classicism > Beethoven (as motif) > serialism (as row, intervals modified)

alt: small-ensemble jazz (Jamal) > Art Tatum

alt: Godowsky embedded virtuosic pattern

Beethoven’s Diabelli Variations transfigures the subject material

See: Diabelli analysis in variation study

33 variations on a conventional theme

Beethoven composed the variations over several years, off and on, therefore it becomes an anthology over a significant life-period

becomes like a compilation of many small pieces (because they weren’t composed together, but were tied to a theme)

Theme as uniting point, allowing variations to be composed separately then be sequenced

compose variations to themes across your whole life, then sequence after many years?

Cultural/extramusical allusions in a variations (what each variation is inspired by) = gives each variation more meaning, anthology

(in this case, Bach, Italian opera, piano technique manuals, parodies)

Axiom/world theory: each variation is a world unto itself

“Delighting and challenging” listener with inventiveness of variations = genius

Metaphoric insistence, psychological variation = Beethoven forces listener to reconcile variations with the original, despite diff

Individual techniques (and their effect)

Theme: Simple, obvious, block chords, less subtle dynamics, conventional cadences, predictable, no chromatics

Possibly rhythmically awkward, lacking rightness (compare with variations)

Variations: More breadth of emotion, more depth of feeling

Virtuosic

Counterintuitive cadences “willed through”, ideas “willed through” (and corroborated)

Tempo: slows, hesitations, rushes, fermata etc. (phrase emphasis, considered/organic tempo)

More extreme tempos (very slow – very fast)

Dynamic ranges: softer and louder than theme, note-note dynamic changes, dynamic let-ups

Alternating voices/hands of different dynamics

Delicacy, more intricate accompaniment pattern/patterns
 Counterintuitive: frequency of an ornament (trill) (var 6)
 Agile rhythm
 Extended sequence building suspense
 Uses more range of piano - octave transpositions of material to high/low ranges, juxtaposition of low and high voices
 Slow builds
 Contrapuntal detail Fugue
 Alternated hyperbole and understatement
 Use of pedal
 Voice inversion of melody (Soprano>Bass)
 Unexpected syncopations
 Diversion from expected cadence
 Rhythmic vitality
 Virtuoso cadenzas
 Humor: irony/parody
 Counterintuitive diversions/parts
 Slow variations = careful patience
 Pulse changes, modular tempo juxtaposition (var 21)
 Greater tolerance for dissonance/chromaticism
 In manner of... (anthology transfiguration)
 Unconventional idea of beauty
 Large-scale directionality
 "Psychological variations" (in light of original theme)
 Duration: longer variations, shorter variations (counterintuitive)
 Minor-key variations
 Anomalistic cadenza planned as climactic event
 Variation 33: return to original scale, but refined (more delicate, understated)
 Counterintuitive ending (forte chord after low dynamic setup)

Greater tolerance for disorder for the sake of a larger order (the polyrhythms in Daphnis intro, the dissonance among instruments)
 = Listener can't immediately discern everything about the interactions
 Sequencing to provide unity, contrast and arc

Gil Evan's "My Ship" transfigures Weil's original

Uses similar harmonies and axioms to the original, but reinterprets them
 Tempo = slower, more glacial, less flippant (makes original seem "glossed over")
 Slower tempo encourages chords to swell slower, each swell seems larger and more impressive (almost like a climax in itself)
 Extended fermata in intro to better prepare for first entrance
 More chromaticism, a slight unease (slight dissonances in voicing style, chromatic countermelodies between phrases)
 Use of contemporary jazz voicing ideas, which have their genesis in classical counterpoint/voice leading
 Less stereotypical ensemble (more neo-classical than "Broadway")
 Idiosyncratic ensemble (soft winds and brass vs. sharp brass, characteristic of Evans)
 Use of sub-ensembles for a non-homogenous texture (winds, low brass, sharp brass)
 Bridge is differentiated by sharp brass, set apart unlike the original (setting apart a b-section with orchestration)
 Increased sensitivity in timbre from original (more quiet, delicate, understatement)
 Intention: introverted, non-broadway (rejects extroversion, garishness), more jazz/art idea
 Melody choices: Miles modifies the melody slightly in places, making the song melody less cliché and more memorable/idiosyncratic

Gil Evan's "Blues For Pablo" transfigures blues

Use of blue notes, minor blues idea = variations on their own blues theme, realized polyphonically with through-composition
 A minor blues etched into polyphonically to create unique moments
 Still, the composition itself (rather than the "minor blues archetype") contains the meaningful moments
 Not a song - it's a theme, then through-composed like a classical piece (esp. after it has been arranged)
 Metaphoric insistence (to say that "Blues for Pablo" indeed remains a blues)
 Addition of a counterintuitive intro and outro w/ cadenzas (with a Spanish influence (like Sketches in Spain))
 Deep yet individualized brass play sinister lines
 Orchestral detail and interaction, countermelody
 Chromaticism, post-minor added onto a minor framework (classical ideas, seems neo-classical)
 Piercing soloist
 Moments of complete stillness and suspense - suspension of thick block chords hanging
 Moments of delicacy, esp. bridge (winds only, soft brass)
 Humanized tempo, fermata, pauses
 Bridge: theme, blue notes/bends, minor chord blues, some ensemble similarities, bassline (solo part), spirit of blues

Michel Legrand soundtracks transfigure easy listening (Summer of 42 OST, Thomas Crown Affair)

Original theme functions like the intro of theme/variations form, the most “normal”/easy listening-like, then diverts w/ more seriousness (The original is still beautiful, even in its most normal form, sensitive and delicate, with musicianship)
 Conventional beauty: texture of reverbed strings, french horn, changing countermelody instruments, still some pointillism, sax soloist, Slow build through the song to tutti statement of melody, piano detail in background (End of the Line-esque)
 - Overall, sounds like Billie Holiday’s ‘Lady in Satin’

Idiosyncrasy/inventiveness in orchestration devices, articulation and axioms set up = uniqueness, interest, detail (melody as anchor)

Orchestration *is* his main dimension of interest, sets up interesting axioms/interactions, creates worlds with ensemble

Axioms amount to the traits/ways of the world he presents, then plays with these assumptions

Wider palette of instruments and axioms than easy listening composers

Use of counterpoint/imitation

Interesting and idiosyncratic countermelody (part of axioms, ambiguity theory)

Variation of original themes (rather than cover versions) = allows for more individuality (than using another’s song)

Variation of themes in different cues, showing various emotional sides while tailoring ensemble and detail to fit the emotion

Variation covers wide spectrum from the happy/trivial to the profound = shocking when profound enters

(more jarring than profound shown alone)

Through-composition: very few literal repetitions (always reinterpreted with new ensemble or axiom)

Use of idiosyncratic “character” within the variations (emotion/effect list) - also different genres

Jazz reference point converges with easy listening, this perspective allows for more rigor and artistic integrity

Classical reference point converges (Stravinsky), providing rigor and definition, esp. to the violent parts (in the OST)

Transfiguration of “the loop” - to the point where each loop has its own identity and ceases to sound repetitious

Use of humanization, tempo change and fermata (tempo change within same piece)

Allowing more dissonance and ambiguity than easy listening (descends into disorder, modulations, chromaticism)

Climax ceiling: much higher than easy listening - build to a monumental, classical-like climax (“And all the Time”)

Bridge: same lushness of tonal vocabulary (ext’d/maj7), use of themes/tunes, orchestration emphasis, lack of vocals, time period

Art Farmer transfigures Michel Legrand (The Summer Knows)

Rejection of plurality of orchestration for small ensemble (purity), then aspires for detail and sensitivity within the ensemble

Theme carried by one central soloist rather than pointillism = individuality, solitude “taste”

The classic small ensemble (with soloist) presents an axiom that lends itself well to profundity, intimacy and starkness

Use of virtuosic musicianship and improvisation vs. orchestration

Sarah Vaughan transfigures Michel Legrand (The Summer Knows)

Use of emotional modifier (darkness, sadness) = replacement of lush sadness with real sadness (stark sadness)

Use of more dissonance beautiful sadness

Use of stark ensemble (bass and piano) - like Art Farmer

Use of counterintuitive ornamentation

Dark, smoky voice = sounds wise, troubled (like Nina Simone on “End of the Line”, Billie on “Lady in Satin”)

Bernard Herrmann’s “Taxi Driver” OST transfigures easy listening jazz

The use of an easy listening theme as a point of return

Puts easy listening theme in a darker context, everything else dwarfs it

(A way to re-legitimize “the small”, by making it a miniature touchstone in a much larger context)

Vague use of jazz, mostly for drum pattern and harmony, but orchestra dominates

(Still functions as a soundtrack, by the need to accompany plot)

Assuming a composed solo (the sax solo), each small melodic decision is a masterful element (rather than soloing for its own sake)

Rejects “solo existing just for the effect of there being one”

Idiosyncratic orchestration (low horns, vibes, snare drum, harp)

Juxtaposed with normal (sax solo, drums, bass, strings, piano comping)

The juxtaposition of orchestra and jazz (the orchestral element is the transfiguring one)

Character of orchestration axioms largely from plot (but could be conceptualized away from it)

Variation of theme:

Noir-jazz (jazz drum pattern with cluster voicings and low range instruments) (“Thank God for the Rain”)

block harmonies treated with swells (rather than static/one dynamic level)

register gradually gets higher (flutes, sharper brass etc.)

Chord progression as a contrafact for a secondary theme

Each variation becomes more abstract, dissonant and intense (disjuncting from the emotion in original progression)

Final time, full bitonality, with theme played in conflicting key with accompaniment, over dirgelike timpanis

Jazz pattern becomes a march pattern, also faster

Bridges: main theme, harmonies, jazz-swing drum pattern

Dave Blume returns “Taxi Driver” to light music

Other:

Wynton Marsalis “Find Me” transfigures Horace Silver’s “Song For My Father”
 Beethoven’s Hammerklavier finale transfigures the fugue
 Led Zeppelin’s “Since I’ve Been Loving You” live version transfigures the studio version
 Beethoven’s 5th Symphony transfigures the motif
 Beethoven’s 9th transfigures the folk song
 Miles Davis’s “Porgy and Bess” transfigures the opera
 Ravel’s “La Valse” transfigures the waltz
 Isaac Hayes’s “Walk on By/Look of Love” transfigures Bacharach’s version
 John Coltrane’s “My Favorite Things” transfigures the original
 Nina Simone “End of the Line” transfigures torch song
 Billie Holiday “Lady In Satin” transfigures torch song
 Richard Strauss’s “Salome” amplifies the biblical story
 Stanley Kubrick transfigures The Shining

How could you have revised “What’s Goin on 2” beat to be more original? (a small binary beat-line study on “What’s Goin’ On”)

Placeholder/substitution (has a mixed-minor loop, minor bridge, minor fermata)
 Work on the melody (give it a real melody)
 Work on solos (give it a real solo, different for 1st and 2nd verse)
 More prominent solos (sax is more expressive than Rhodes)
 Compose the comping (rather than accept what you played - make more eventful and musical)
 Hire real vocalists and/or band - real vocalist sensitive ad libs, like the original
 Take the loops and through-compose them
 Through-compose everything - percussion, bassline, solos, tempo, comping
 Build to higher climax for chorus
 Thicker string section for bridge and climax
 More dramatic/longer fermata (with more of a lull)
 Tempotrack/considered tempo
 More dramatic reinterpretation for second verse
 More patient, defining progression better
 React to original by composing a reaction-song with aspects of the original
 Compose it as a Marvin Gaye tribute, expand it to include quotes from other works
 Make bridge more notched and angular
 Make bridge more classically orchestrated (climax ceiling, make a huge orchestral bridge that dwarfs the verse/chorus)
 Different orchestration (more expressive, more polyphonic?)
 Polyphonic lines to replace the comping instruments (wind interactions? duet?)
 Don’t be afraid to inject certain directions into the music - scared of “breaking genre conventions”
 Such as bringing a huge orchestral section into a soul song, or using a Penderecki bridge for a torch song
 For fear of being melodramatic?
 Also afraid to try to compose songs in the jazz/post-minor vernacular you value.

Transfiguration of 'Maj7'/Extended Harmony

Summary: Prescriptions for transfiguring an extended harmonic language (referred to as “major 7”, but including the general pre-dissonant/impressionist/jazz vocab up to 13ths), preserving its prized emotional quality while going past its pervasive use in pop music into higher contexts. This requires divorce/disassociation from past stereotypes (as “sweet”, “sentimental”, “pop”, “old-fashioned”), then exacting strategies: general transfiguration strategies, counterpoint, axiom, collage and ultimately veiling. Where many strategies involve enveloping the extended vocabulary within a “dissonant frame” where only fleeting “flashes” would remain, veiling (layering through collage) allows an object of entirely extended vocabulary to coexist with dissonant objects, creating a new object with both features simultaneously audible (“veiled” by dissonant layers).

Why Extended Harmony?

Music with extended tonality gives the “illusion of experience”/knowledge - because *melancholy is the nature of experience*
 The best music gives the feeling that it “knows” the mysteries of life, or at least empathizes with human struggles
 “Music from an experienced person - talking about their experiences”
 = supports Maj7/13 vocabulary
 Which means much of pop’s use of these progressions has been a misreading of their meaning and potential
 Therefore use of extended tonality can’t be *reduced* to a simple “willful decision on the part of the artist”
 “Assertion of knowledge against the impossibility/absurdity of it”

New Style: The radical orientation of the new style allows any harmony (full spectrum) to be used, because it is a secondary “emotional casting” or a consequence of the initial musical material (if there is any)

Fundamental re-evaluation of harmony (pre-veiling, still relevant):

all new innovations in harmony, to replace the “piecemeal transfiguration” of maj7.
 including re-evaluating the need for harmony itself - rejecting it could be powerful?
 we need a radicality spectrum with harmonic solutions in hierarchy, and the symbolism behind each - to avoid relativism.
 extend to much more ambiguous collage across a wider stereo field, also to singular objects - complex system
 Shimmer experiments, layering/collage experiments
 symbolic harmony (i.e. major triad = purity, octave = ideal, etc. (watch Western bias)
 meta - talking about harmony (branch)

“What’s missing from most maj7/m7 scores is the intellectual idea, present in much of the masters”

Sensuality and mannerism transfigured by high idea
 (rigor, organization/form, pedagogical, allusion/commentary, historical ideas, names, gesture, connectivity, justification)
 Neo-classical maj7/min7
 “Intellectual shadow” a la Berg (“hidden” intellectual governance of idea in dramatic form)
 Form as able to give meaning otherwise impossible
 Sonata form a benchmark for creating dramatic forms, based on plot

The way harmony is treated – an individual chord can sound sparse or romantic, but the *relationship between chords* gives away a tonal work

Tone rows to achieve an “active staticity” and govern it
 Tonal flashes w/ symbolism
 Crafting *objects* from a progression, thus disguising it
 stop associating extended progs with summer – it’s way more high-sounding/majestic
 = Reappropriate for higher genres
 Unforgiving/extreme axioms (Rite, audio benchmarks)
 Must combine sensual progressions with severity
 Developing variation to pervade a work with a certain, very definite harmonic character
 Non-sensual concepts
 Break down chords and progs to their interval, then fill out with scales (passing tones)
 Spoken dialogue rather than song (like summer rap)
 Ironic concepts vs. music
 Expanded through modulation
 Melodies exalt chord progressions
 Axiom transfigures harmony

Classicizing pop progressions: Maj9, m9, m11 progs

For developing/variation form of initial tonal material (like the “Smithsonian gem” idea)
 “...Jeux isn’t the only “refined” way to assert tonality”

Title and concept: the “front line” in artistry
 Abstract, controversial, esoteric, intense, intellectual concepts
 Without its external associations (60’s movies, easy listening/lounge/pop, impressionism) it can be *redefined*
 Full symbolism of objects and interactions
 Audacious ideas, that happen to be using tonal progressions (escalation in Journey To Midnight)
 Abstraction of “summer” or “night” soul aesthetics
 Extreme gestures using features of songs in mixes as point of departure
 Using appropriation objects and axioms from high art music/classical

Extended suspense objects

Dialectics:

Easy listening and violence
Notch figure vs. clouds/sheer dissonance
Human world vs. universe/objectivity

...and transitions between:

Smooth: dissolution, subversion, tone editing (single axiom, etc.)
Modular: beat 1 anacrusis, silence division, silence division w/ subversion

Rhythm:

Human, axiomatic, non-square rhythm (cinema music, Strav, Debussy, etc.)

Include in long line, or make explicit that it's a loop (objective vamp): the first step out of pop is to deny the loop

Dissolve progression surround by more dissonant chords

Melody:

Using symphonic-type melody, rather than pop (Danse Religieuse) axiomatic, eventful melody
Pentatonic scales (esp. w/ bend?)

Modulation: extension, and modulatory sound (then unite with melody?)

Subversion:

Subversion of the whole language: progressively (Taxi Driver, incoherence theory)
Trill in bass, esp. close or dissonant interval (half step, whole step) trill mass in bass
Dissonant action in bass (like Rite intro)

Extended pedal point (Dr. Jesus) trill?

Ostinato w/ build (Dr. Jesus) audio size realism + harmonization

Dissolving:

Sustained bassline (or bare 5th) with angular theme in treble
Angular theme can then be harmonized more dissonantly
Middle voices can be added using polytonality (11ths, 13ths)

Voicing:

Unique voicing - usu. implying melody, more intervals than just 3rds
5th/4th voicing: bare 5ths, tritones 4ths in harmonization
Dissonant voicing close-interval doubling (Historie Du Soldat, Gil Evans)

Organic action

Irregular/organic arpeggios: fast action within arpeggio, possibly using passing tones (Soldat Pt. II)
Incoherence theory in general (w/ drums?)

Objective vamp (Sondheim, Stravinsky)

Sparse: lines based on arpeggios, implying the chord

Interval ostinato (Beat Gently Weeps)

Orchestration: transfiguration ensembles

Mandatory orchestration process to break possibility of pedestrian/vulgar orchestration
Hard ensembles, small ensembles (Webern, Boulez, Herrmann, jazz)
string quartet (Soldat) solo instruments (Webern) drum/harp (Taxi Driver)
winds/brass (Gil Evans), in sub-ensembles

Live ambience

Chord transfiguration:

Asserted chord progression (strongly, dramatically): forte chords, swelling chords (Taxi Driver, Is It Real Love session)
Principle of assertion = audacity

Chord tower (octaves high build)

Bend language, human language: can it transfigure pop progs?

Swell axiom (extreme swells, to oscillation?) vibrato fast chop

...where can you go from this assertion (form-wise?)

Echo

Accelerando (Taxi Driver)

Gratifying harmonizations: modifying a main melody (Keeping My Mind On You)

Morton Feldman axiom with gradually more dissonant language - from summer to pure dissonance, plus audio size realism/swell

Add motif/melody? at end, it's harmonized in clusters, then finally dissolves

No swing - classical influence

Ugliness in interpretation Every instrument an expressive soloist, given their own space by panning

Benchmarks:

Daphnis Et Chloe Journey To Midnight OST
Feldman Quartet II
Rite Of Spring Historie Du Soldat
Sondheim: Sweeney Todd, Liasons, Into The Woods Intro
Taxi Driver OST
Ravel - Mirors 3
Jimi Hendrix (drums) Gil Evans (slight drums)