

On factors influencing musical tension and its perception in Erkki-Sven Tüür's piece „Oxymoron“

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Abstract

Aim of this article is to explore what musical factors influence the perception of musical tension in „Oxymoron“ (2003) by Erkki-Sven Tüür (1959). Due to this question the form of the piece was analyzed and juxtaposed with graphs derived from perception tests using the same piece as audio stimulus. Because the form of „Oxymoron“ generally spoken consists not of clearly defined sections, it was impossible to apply traditional analytical methods of formal analysis. Instead new terms „impulse“, „culmination“, „contrast“ and „contrast-culmination“ are applied which can be understood as significant features or complexes of features appearing during development of the music in time. These terms are developed by the author of this article and are ranged on the basis of their relative structural meaning on local and global level. The comparison of formal analysis graph with average graph of perception test shows a relatively strong correlation between formal analysis and perception results confirming the hypothesis of this article: on global level and at important points of the formal development of the piece the musical tension is perceived relatively similarly.