

Finding a Composer's Expressive Code:

1. Assessing the Background:

- a. Birth country musical traditions
- b. Adopted country musical traditions
- c. Social class influences
- d. Religious and /or political beliefs
- e. Contemporary stylistic tendencies
- f. Important historical events
- g. Career issues and events
- h. Gender influences

2. The Influence of Other Composers:

- a. Teachers
- b. Acknowledged models
- c. Unacknowledged models
- d. Contemporaries in music or in any other art or discipline

3. The Composer's Musical Profile and What Can Be Expected:

- a. Melody
- b. Harmony
- c. Rhythm.
- d. Timbre
- e. Texture
- f. Form
- g. Historical Performance practice and contexts

4. Context and Perception

- a. The assumed role and documented perception of the composer's work in his//her social context
- b. The assumed role and documented perception of the composer's work in his/her historical time.
- c. Current audience expectations
- d. Current critical reception and expectations

5. Cracking the Code- A Matrix for Interpretation (see matrix in graph format below).

- a. Expressive themes (What the composer wishes to convey)
- b. Artistic attitudes (The way in which s/he wishes to be perceived)
- c. Rhetorical language (The recurrent values, symbols and techniques in the music)
- d. Musical objectives (The musical achievements sought)
- e. Possible performance solutions.

The conductor's interpretation prism

