

# PRINCIPLES

2006-2008

FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT, AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 2007-2012 PERIOD

## Generalization/New Style significance:

### NS:

This is the genesis of the higher principle that elevated and superseded TL music creation

*These are still "high anchors" for NS and its components*

Some of the better explanations for certain I.O. concepts

Pillars of NS - "NS grounding"

"Everything must be possible"

Music as proof > reification

"Sense perception is only a shadow" > theoretical style

"Compose for eternity" > future orientation

Also: norms to accept or reject

A reification might reject some of these = creating a strong comment on the subject

Essential to "I.O. as approach"

Perspectives embedded within NS (classicism, humanism, humor - though none given absolute power)

### Generalization:

All principles true/relevant to your aesthetic (not just music)

esp. high principle/ideals

All principles discovered + yet to be discovered + unable to be discovered

+ Negative generalization: no...

## CLASSICAL IDEA

**Classical Idea:** "Classical" refers to Ancient Greece

The use of primary ratios in Greek architecture (Acropolis) (1/1, 2/1, 3/2, 4/3)

Ideas of beauty/good (Agape) in Plato's Dialogues

Agape: Love of God, mankind, truth and beauty, and the mind/emotional state associated with it

Classical Intent: Supercedes cultural level stylistic decisions

Beauty and Science: The quality and extent of beauty is decided by rigorous scientific verification

Humanism: "There is nothing in the universe that is not potentially intelligible to the human mind"

An idea is self-justifying by its effect in practice (music as a proof)

Anything is Possible: "Everything must be possible" – Bach (breaking the rules in a truthful way)

Range of Expressivity: Any quality can be expressed in a composition.

Idea Superiority: From the 'outside in' (the nature of the idea determines how it will be expressed)

Ideas must govern a work

Ideas vs. Sensual Domain: Never allow emphasis on the sensual over the idea. Reconcile the two.

Shadow/"Playing between the notes" – sense perception of a work is only a shadow of ideas that govern it

Hence, sense perception is a second-hand phenomenon

**A Process of Thought is an Idea:** Idea can be the exhibition of a process of thought – showing a lawful mind's thought process

The Evolution of an Idea: Exploration/building of an idea *over time* to its logical end/conclusion

**Inherent Logic:** Great music is inherently logical, mathematical and architectural.

### Total Connectivity/Holistic Idea:

Classical works can only be truly understood in their entirety – each part gains profound significance *in light of the whole*

Work ultimately forms a single idea (although the work may be comprised of many other ideas)

*Inevitability:* Each part/component leads naturally to the next ("rightness")

Completeness in an Ideal Work: Nothing can be added without feeling of excess, or taken away without diminishment.

Universal "Perfect" Dissonance: Uneven, elliptical orbits represent how the universe is structured in a seemingly off-kilter, yet profoundly ordered way. This represents a necessary dissonance in music, conventionally unpleasant yet supremely beautiful

Also: Pythagorean comma

Counterintuition: The best artists often make decisions against conventional wisdom/expectations, creating a dissonance in the mind of the audience and musicians performing it.

Harmony: An entity corresponding in action to its potential for good, to its essential nature

**Higher-Form Evolution:** Something evolves predictably, toward a boundary where it will become so fundamentally different so as to become a *new species* - multi-sided shapes add sides until they resemble a circle, but will never become a circle until a fundamental change occurs, thus still belonging to an evolution of shape, but simultaneously are fundamentally different

Implication: The use of certain ideas/processes fundamentally differentiate the art from lesser species,

despite superficial similarities

Real Function: Broaden focus by looking past the boundaries of a discipline to the overall desired objective/function – to the universe/world/society, to the individual etc.

Could the idea could best be expressed in a different medium, area of life, or several combined?

What is the best way to achieve/express this idea/function, regardless of medium or discipline?

Why is a certain discipline better than another to express a certain idea?

Outside-In: Understand a discipline from outside, through objective structures and phenomena, and their interactions.

Anything outside the discipline is a *potential input* into the discipline.

Provides for insight/perspective, originality and invention, while deterring insulation inside the discipline itself.

Examples: Natural Beauty (structure of the universe, nature, sciences), history, principles of drama/human interaction, etc.

## CLASSICAL INTENT

**Classical Intent as Essential:** Intent is essential in the creation of a work – and a major differentiating quality of a classical/meaningful work

**“Absolute Music”/Classical Music as Highest Species:**

Regardless of genre, music made with classical intent/exemplifying classical principle becomes a higher species of music.

Classical intent and principle differentiate this highest of species from the lesser.

**Journey Matters:** The journey and/or process the creator took to derive the ideas and create the work itself lend weight to the work

**Source Matters:** A work, statement or artistic decision is lent certain weight/credibility/importance in light of the greatness of its creator

Source is also a key ingredient in discerning *counterintuitiveness* from *incorrectness*

**Subjectivity vs. Objectivity as False Dichotomy:** The distinction is false - the artist can never be separated from their art.

**A Priori vs. Truth (Ends vs. Means):** “The end must be preexistent in the means”.

One must come to a conclusion through a truthful journey. Perhaps show the journey to truth through the work.

Deliberate-ness:

**Exorcism of the Arbitrary:** Eliminate the accidental and unnecessary, leaving only deliberate and justifiable choice/decision

Both the creation/choice of musical material and decisions made regarding its use can be *entirely deliberate*

The artist should not do anything they cannot justify/reconcile

Why vs. What: *Why* something is correct is as important as *what* is correct (to understand that correct values are not arbitrary)

## BEAUTY

**Beauty:** “Should man be beautiful?”, and “is man beautiful?” are questions that underlie “should man create/compose?”

Promethean Principle: Man, made in the image of the creator, assumes the role of the creator, wielding Godly power during creativity

Imitate the creator’s architecting of nature by creating “huge structures full of nobility”

Man is endowed with creative powers by *natural law*

Necessity of Creation: The creation of beauty is always needed, always relevant, never redundant.

Microcosm vs. Macrocosm: Reason of man reflects the ordering of the universe

Man must consciously act, in freedom, to *extend creation*

**Natural Beauty:** Beautiful forms *as they occur in nature*. Objective systems, phenomena, and properties (based on physical principles)

Musical: Golden section, human voice registers, tuning C=256/A=432, well-tempered tuning system

– basis in natural beauty makes music a “universal language”

“Is man universal?” equates to “is truth universal?” underlying the question of musical universality

*Discovered*, not created, by man “the foundation of artistry”

The ordering of living processes – “life is beautiful”

**Artistic Beauty:** New level of beauty made by the creative mind of man, the joy in creating and discovery/interpretation/performance

Applied science/technology to increase potential population-density of mankind

**Long-Line Interpretation:** Beginning-to-end dramatic/emotional *coherence/cohesiveness*

Beyond Perfection/Reinterpretation: Achieve perfection, *then get beyond it*.

Breathe life/emotion into the work: analyze/reinterpret based on its profound qualities

(through performance, replaying, improvisation, variation, etc.)

**Goal:** *The perfection of man’s use of natural beauty*

**Immortality:** One can achieve immortality through their work/ideas/legacy – the things that ultimately live on after mortal death

**Dialogue of History:** The life/legacy of present-day humans/society is a “comment”/addition to the comments of everyone who came before.

It is the present-day human’s responsibility to continue, add to and improve this historical dialogue.

Noble Groundwork: Laying the groundwork today will make greater achievements possible in the future. This task is noble in itself.

**Compose for Eternity:** Make a work as much for future and past generations as your own. This “forces” the discovery of/adherence to classical, universal principles of composition and of the human experience.

“People who don’t aspire to write classics are hacks”.

“To someone 500 years from now, we’re making mostly mistakes” – in light of a greater perfection of man’s use of natural beauty

Realm of Possibility: Trust that more will be possible in the future (technology, ideas etc.), so don’t focus on limitations

**Music as a Reflection of the Aspirations of a Society:** In enlightened society, art reflects upward momentum, whereas in a degenerate culture, art reflects downward momentum (superficial, escapism) – the ‘mainstream’ as a barometer for the health of a society?

**Combating Inherent Ugliness:** Ugliness/decay is inherent in life, and is a threat to the dignity of man. Life = beautiful Deadness = ugly  
 One who triumphs over this ugliness and elevates the dignity of man is considered a true artist.  
 This is represented in the ‘spirit/soul vs. flesh’, and the ‘Apollo vs. Dionysus’ dichotomies.  
 Forged/Tested Dignity: Dignity with full knowledge of ugliness, or in the presence of ugliness is more powerful than dignity by itself.  
 The artist must work to elevate the balance of good over evil, to maintain/increase good’s level over evil.

**Transfiguration:** Elevated by the artist to the profound arena – resurrects relevance through exploration at highest level  
 Summation/culmination/evolution of a period/idea, *elevated to the profound*  
 Artist as Redeemer: Bringing out the classical intent/Godly qualities  
 Through development and ‘due diligence’, the composer can exalt *any quality* of musical material  
 (analogous to the process of saving a soul) – and a test of composer’s skill  
 Re-legitimization: Works that began as “small” or trivial, a whim or experiment, are able to be re-legitimized or transfigured

**Counterintuition/Reactionary Principle:** Compose with audience reaction in mind, aiming to achieve *precisely calculable* effect within audience  
 Counterintuition: Composition acting with and against the expectations of an audience to achieve a heightened profundity.  
 (Irony, metaphor, paradox, juxtaposition)  
 “Ghostface” Principle: The artist engages the audience by being engaged himself.

#### Development:

Development Process: Undergoing multi-layer systematic development process designed to uncover potential within material  
 Development as Metaphor: Transformations of musical material creates metaphor, between material derived from same source  
*Omnipresent View:* The simultaneity of these transformations represents omniscience - an ability to know all perspectives at once, delivering it to man in the manner of Prometheus

**Inherent Uniqueness:** Similarity is inevitable, however no two individuals or creations are alike, due to many differentiating factors.  
 Time/Context Uniqueness: Time and context are always pre-existing conditions for uniqueness – time/context are forever changing.  
 Redundancy: Doing/creating approximately the same thing may be *meaningful* due to the time/context factor  
 Simultaneity: Re-discovery of idea/scientific principle by a new person, a new generation  
 Literal Repetition: Literal repetition cannot technically exist, because the time/context is different with each repetition  
 Newness: “New and different” *for newness’s sake*, is a product of the ego and isn’t meaningful in itself (arbitrary variation)  
 Timelessness in Music: Exorcise cliché by rejecting time-sensitive ‘fashion’ art - if it was good once, it still should be  
 If one finds objective merit in any device/style/genre across time, it must be eligible for use/transfiguration  
 Disregard the false anachronisms derived from cultural-level marketing/‘need for newness’/feeling of ownership  
 False Clichés: Cliché doesn’t exist in real life, only universals and patterns of meaningful action  
 ...in the Artist: Each human being is *unique* and shouldn’t be threatened/discouraged by the different artistic decisions of others  
 Why? Different mind, different context, etc.  
 instead celebrate the uniqueness of one’s own work, and the worth inherent in it  
 It is a fallacy to measure oneself by the decisions of others, because each work demands certain different decisions  
 One can’t do ‘everyone’s music’ – set personal musical goals and achieve them instead  
 Imitation: Even if an artist decided to imitate an element of another work, it would be refracted through other modifiers  
 ...in an Artistic Work: Each work (even revisions of the same work) is *completely unique*. Change in part changes the entire.

**Relevance to ‘the Masses’:** Often the key quality that makes a work urgently relevant to the public is its creation/existence in the present  
 Injection of timeless principles and devices *into a current vehicle*

**Journey Transferability:** Can a journey/conclusion/experience/thought be transferred - in complete – from one person to another?  
 Must it be experienced by the other person or is there a “shortcut”?

**Objective vs. Subjective Expectations:** The derivation of the criteria used to judge artistic success or failure  
 1. Works succeed or fail in light of every other work ever created, including the universe itself  
 2. Works succeed or fail based on their own expectations (the expectations created by the work, within the work)  
 3. Works succeed or fail based on the context in which they are presented (the situation, environment, state of mind of listener)

**Significance and Effort:** The importance of the desired result dictates the intensity/amount of effort needed to achieve them  
 Perfection vs. Revision: One should not expect perfection of initial material – revision and omission are *essential* elements of art  
 Scientific Method/Experimentation: Effort extends until the objective is reached, no sooner (ex: Bach’s 26 bass lines)  
 Recognizing the Incorrect: The ability *to reject* is as essential as the ability to accept  
 Faith: It is an act of faith to compose, and doubting one’s creative powers dishonors this faith.

#### Action:

The Tightrope: Like a tightrope walker, often the only practice is the actual act. You can’t truly understand without undergoing the process firsthand, which becomes a transformational experience. “You’ve got to be there”.  
 No Substitute: The theoretical/second-hand *cannot substitute* for first-hand discovery/understanding/reconciliation  
 Action is Transformative: Action has potential to transform thought and behavior - act like the thing you want to become, in that way  
 Action’s “Never” Principle: Action principle in the negative – if one *never* does something, the result will *never* materialize

**Change:**

Welcoming Change: The sooner the change, the sooner the false hope of ‘frozen time’ is out of possibility, refocusing back to reality  
 Preemptive Change: Change before change happens *to* you  
 Understanding Change: Understand change by being inside it – being a part/cause of the change

**Scientific Method:**

Process vs. Knowledge: Process is superior to knowledge, b/c its open architecture makes it more able to deal with the unknown (yet process can create bias as well.)  
 Past Knowledge Bias: The brain instantly tries to convert the unknown to known, viewing unknowns *in terms of the known* is a hazard  
 Lack of Knowledge as Beginning Point: Socratic method

**MUSIC****Anything Is Possible:**

Today’s impossibilities are tomorrow’s possibilities  
 Never underestimate the capability of virtuosos  
 Someone may already have done it – use achievements of the present and past as a guide  
 If not possible, ask why, find out how the obstacles can be overcome

“**Absolute Music**”: The highest level of music regardless of genre, about ideas and therefore not constrained by genre conventions  
 The ‘Absolute Musician’: The absolute musician seeks the highest level of music/musical thinking, not constrained by genre conventions  
 Classical intent “Genre-Free Elite”

**Fundamental Properties of Music:**

Hearing: Music is heard, and seen secondarily as a function of performance and notation  
 Time: Music exists over time, and can therefore show difference over time (like literature/drama/cinema, unlike painting/photography)  
 One hears a series of transformations music is a journey/experience/plot  
 Performance/Interpretation: Performed music is never the same twice  
 Recorded Music: Fixed form of creation/performance – more analogous to painting/literature  
 Simultaneity: Multiple events happening at once; at any given time  
 Silence is a fundamental aspect of music – “the canvas music is painted on”

**Music as a Fully Developed Language:** Music is a legitimate/fully formed language. Any outside/added info is secondary to the music itself.

**Aspects of Great Music:**Key Elements:

1. Quality and nature of musical material
2. Quality and nature of compositional decisions made with the material
3. Context (purpose, historical, program/text, etc.) (task based composing)
4. Artist

Invention vs. Development:

Invention: Creation of musical material, ideas and structures

Development: Methods/strategies for expanding/exposing potential within musical material/ideas/structures

Aspects of Greatness:

The classical intent of the artist  
 Passion/conviction  
 Depth and/or breadth of emotion/expressivity

Scientific developments: Pioneering/legitimizing new systems/methods etc. within the discipline (Equal temperament etc.)  
 Pedagogical value: Works and life become a living “textbook” for others to learn from (theories, practices/decisions etc.)  
 Answers/attempts to answer profound musical questions – and brings up new questions  
 Innovations/proofs of principles (prove a principle by action/context) – proving viability of a technique/popularizing it  
 Supreme/superior craftsmanship as default

Ability to synthesize/develop all aspects of their art/discipline at once (to make a coherent language)

Transfiguration: Summation/culmination/evolution of a period/idea, elevated to the profound  
 The greatest thinkers/artists are at once a culmination/summation and a new beginning  
 Counterintuition: Uniqueness in compositional decisions

Experience  
 Insight/maturity  
 Effort/struggle to achieve

Previous works by composer  
 Historical relevance/significance (external to music)

**Extreme Musicality:** The ultimate quality/objective of music – *life*, expressivity, humanity, morality, emotion, intangibilities etc.

**Total Connectivity:** Any idea/element is within the context of the whole composition, affects the whole.

Any element within the whole can only be fully understood in *light of the whole*.

This compositional “Butterfly Effect” births sub-ideas like inevitability, accountability, proportion, balance, acknowledgement, micro/macrocasm, tension/resolution etc.

**Counterpoint:**

Each move by a voice creates a new geometry/social situation among the voices

A change in one voice changes how the other voices are heard

“Increase the wealth of the musical language”

The relationship is also heard against every potential interaction in the system (as decision)

**Organic Counterpoint:** The creation of organic structure through contrapuntal voices, where all elements of music meet and purify

The arena where all elements of music (melody, harmony, rhythm, form, etc.) are *no longer able to be viewed separately*

Demands that the composer be able to synthesize many musical factors/inputs *at once*

Detail: Unconscious elements that contributes to the experience/enjoyment/enrichment of the listener

**Task-Based Composing:** The real/imagined situation/purpose as governing principle for the work = creative problem solving

Artists do not exist in a void

Multiple Solutions: There is more than one feasible solution for every artistic task/problem – unique solutions

‘Grounding In Reality’ – Reality often imposes parameters from which to work within

Provides direction and focus of one’s creativity

Implies what is possible and impossible – ex: writing for a certain ensemble dictates number of voices in counterpoint

Or, find a way to overcome the restrictions, and conceptualize the *exact work needed*

‘Grounding In Physical Principle’: Composer must adhere to tuning, voice/instrument registers, dynamic limits, breathing limits

What Did It Take?: Analyze all the internal and external factors that went into making a great piece of art.

Time period/context, artist’s life/work, the ideas/works/movements that paved the way (that were necessary for work to exist)

Literary works, ideologies, social movements, people

To create complex emotion, as complex emotion is often best described by situation

**Complex Emotion:** Emotion of a combined nature, *between* polar opposites, not easily explained by one adjective - more easily explained using situation/extended description - emotion that the mind isn’t easily able to break down into simpler emotions (bittersweet, mysterious etc.)

...versus simple emotion: In art, the representation of certain emotions are standardized and therefore simple (ex: maj/min dichotomy).

Complex emotion lies in the gray area between polar opposite emotions, therefore more difficult to express = ambiguity.

Counterintuition – oddly juxtaposed aspects/elements with different/conflicting emotional values

**Rhythmic Thesis:** Rhythm as the foundation of music - rhythmic pattern is musically fundamental and has expressive characteristics

**Text Exalted by Music:** Words are shadows conceived to explain a physical idea – many experiences/concepts lose profundity when spoken.

Setting a text *to music* can help to bridge the gap between description and actual experience.

**Musicianship/Playing:**

Physicality of Music: Often a composition is conceived/created by physically playing it, therefore its nature, structure and devices are more easily understood/explained on this basis (especially solo works, or works derived from a solo instrument (piano))

Playing Creates the Micro-Level: The many micro-level intricacies achieved by the act of playing an instrument can never be replicated or created by anything but the actual act of playing (versus shadows like notation or programming/MIDI).

**Myth of the Incorrect:** Without a compositional objective, possibilities for a composition are all encompassing, and therefore the “incorrect” is simply a step toward a certain area of possibility

**The Nature of Decision:** At any single period in time, a made decision ‘cuts off’ other possible choices.

There are, however, good and bad choices *based on the desired objectives*..