

MUS 735

Discussion - Hitchcock, Chapter 3

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Cultivated and Vernacular: Discuss what these two bodies of music are to you, what music you use today that fits into Hitchcock's definition of each. Post examples of each that you use in your teaching/performing.

Admittedly, I find that I'm still trying to get my head around these two types of music. My interpretation is: Cultivated music is music that is classical, art-music. It is written down, learned by reading, and intended to be performed formally, and performed for its own sake. Vernacular music is popular or folk music (or eventually becomes folk music). It is more aural, rote-based, and improvisatory in nature.

In applying this to my teaching, my first thought was of individual instruction. The spirit of these approaches exists in every music lesson. When working with students, my ultimate goal is that they can proficiently and independently read music, and we use written exercises in our method books to achieve this aim. That is the cultivated music thinking - performing music at sight independently. Sometimes, especially if I am trying to teach something more abstract or subjective, I'll start with just explaining or demonstrating a concept, ask the student what they heard, and ask them to try it, all without seeing the concept notated. This is my vernacular music view of how I approach individual instruction.

The next lens I viewed cultivated music vs. vernacular music through was that of my concert ensembles. In this vein, I could see cultivated music including band transcriptions of classical works, or what we call "legit" pieces for concert band, perhaps taken from one of several state prescribed lists. Some of my favorite pieces in this category include:

Moscow, 1941 by Brian Balmages

<http://www.fjhmusic.com/band/mp3/b1320.mp3>

Themes from First Suite in Eb by Gustav Holst, arranged by Michael Sweeney

<https://www.jwpepper.com/sheet-music/media-player.jsp?&productID=10022288&type=video>

Hitchcock describes vernacular music as popular or folk music. There is an abundance of this genre in the concert band repertoire, and a couple of my favorites, that I feel fit into this category, are:

When The Saints Go Marchin' In, arranged by Andy Clark

<https://www.jwpepper.com/sheet-music/media-player.jsp?&productID=10013895&type=audio>

Kentucky 1800 by Clare Grundman

<https://www.jwpepper.com/sheet-music/media-player.jsp?&productID=150391&type=video>