



**Tunku Abdul Rahman University College**

**Faculty of Applied Sciences**

**BHLA2313 Music Appreciation**

**GROUP CONCERT REPORT**

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Lecturer : **Mr. Lim Yong Jia**

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Marking Criteria	Marks	Marks Awarded	Range of Performance				
			Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
1. Analysis/ Support of Ideas	40						
2. Thought/ Perception	20						
3. Organisation/ Flow/ Format	10	8					
4. Content/ Information	10	8					
5. References/ Citation	10	8.5					
6. Grammar	10						
Total	100 (25%)						
Grade							
Comments							

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**I/We further confirm that the same work, where appropriate, has been verified by anti-plagiarism software Turnitin (*please insert*).**

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Date: 28 July 2021

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# 1. Introduction

The music concert we selected is the Season Opening Concert by Frankfurt Radio Symphony which performed at the **Alte Oper Frankfurt** in Frankfurt am Main, Hesse, Germany (rbartists, n.d.). This season's opening concert was held on **13th September 2019** and the purpose was to give unconventional insights to the audience with the new concert format “**Spotlight Mini**”. The concert starts with the opening piece of Joseph Haydn's Symphony No. 84, then various pieces from Barber and Gershwin such as Barber's Toccata Festiva, Gershwin's An American in Paris and Barber's Porgy and Bess (Excerpts), playing along with the Cape Town Opera Chorus. The whole concert was conducted by **Andrés Orozco-Estrada and the orchestra, Frankfurt Radio Symphony**. The music piece we decide to analyze is **An American in Paris**. Andrés Orozco-Estrada is a Columbian violinist and conductor, hence, he decided to move on his music path as a conductor. Energy, elegance, esprit - that is what distinguishes Andrés Orozco-Estrada as a musician (orozco-estrada, n.d.). There is always a passion burning inside him when he conducting the performance. Frankfurter Neue Presse also commented on his performance during September 2016, “Orozco-Estrada brought together flowing tempi with carefully polished details. The orchestra was on top form”. Currently, he is leading the Vienna Symphony Orchestra as their Music Director, also Chief Conductor of the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra, and Music Director of the Houston Symphony Orchestra since the 2014/15 season.

## 2. Contents

### 2.1 Music Analysis

The **genre** of the music piece, An American in Paris, is a musical comedy film. Conceived as concert music and developed into dance music, it is a strong candidate for the study of choreography as an interpretation of musical structure (Spencer, 2019). An American in Paris also expresses its music with the **genres** of Comedy and Romantic. Most importantly, it has the genre of Jazz which makes the music piece easily recognizable that it is a creation from George Gershwin (Fowler, 2014).

An American in Paris can distribute for four **themes** which are walking theme, car honk theme, blues theme and the layering of all major themes. Section A is composed of a Walking theme and Car horn theme, and Section B is composed of Blues theme. Besides that, Section A' composed by the layering of all major themes.

From the start, This **theme** begins from the beginning of the performance which is from **Measure 1 till Measure 248**. In the performance, the theme is mostly played by the violins and the cello from the string family, Brass winds instruments and the woodwind family instruments such as the flutes and oboe. The **style** of this section A actually is written in the style of typical French style of composers Claude Debussy and Les Six (Burton, 2015). In this theme, the **pitch** of the violin turns into a high pitch and then back to the middle pitch while the **dynamic** of this piece of song begins with a mezzo-piano melody with the flutes and violins while the flutes get diminuendo. It brings out the feeling like a man rushes to work on the street and stops suddenly to think something, then continues to rush to work like the running motivation will bring out in

our mind. The **tone color** is bright and brilliant in the beginning as well. Then, the melody goes crescendo to forte to bring in a short solo performance of forte melody from the trumpets and trombone. Then, the melody is followed by the cello which is gradually softer to thunder the mezzo-forte melody from the violin and ends with xylophone which makes this whole melody able to express the **feeling** of preparation for exploring which ends the theme of walking and running motive component. The **theme** is ended with a forte melody from the cymbals as the beats and fortissimo melody from the violins to bring back the audience to feel the busyness of the cities and finish with a solo performance from the solo-violinist with a mezzo piano melody. He plays the **broken chords** repeatedly for a few measures which expresses the **mood** of returning to a normal lifestyle after the excitement.

In between the walking theme, the music introduces the **car horn theme** which in measure 28 to measure 63. In this theme, it is easily recognised by the unique instrument appearing in the music which is the Car horn. The performance prepared 4 different tones of Car horn which are A, B, F and G tones. As for the **pitch**, the pitch of the car horn turns into high pitch and low pitch. The **feeling** of this theme brings out Paris as a busy city at the time. There are more cars in the crowd on the road. For this reason, some of the drivers are not patient and pick up the horn on the road. The **tone color** is mellow. In the car honk theme, the majority **dynamics** of the melody is in forte and mezzo-forte where the end of the melody goes crescendo poco a poco to fortissimo then a sudden decrease of a melody to piano which is played by the English horn which gives an effect of the **mood** of sorrows.

In the B contrast section, it begins with a Blues theme. The Blues theme expressed people's feelings of pain and grief(Nia, n.d). The blue theme was introduced in the measure of 392 to measure 481. The instrumentation is now predominantly brass, saxophones, and strings,

augmented by the wire brushes and wood block in the percussion, marking the shift into the nightclub atmosphere of the blues (Fowler, 2014).

In the Blue Theme, its **dynamic** started with a mezzo piano melody from the flutes and clarinet then it had sudden changes to forte melody by the trumpets which awakes the audience. The flutes present a new rhythmic profile that drives through the blues without obscuring the overall emotional tone of the section (Fowler, 2014). The performance continues with the forte melody by the BrassWinds and Woodwinds instruments with few measures the it gets diminuendo to pianissimo to express the feeling of calmness and the melody continues with piano melody from the violins. The sounds of the trumpet and the harmony are both more intense and simple, and it is followed by rich blues with a **strong rhythmic undercurrent** (Carnovale, 2021). Suddenly, the music becomes frantic as the trumpet is played with a very high **rhythm** which makes the listener feel panic. After a while, the mood of the song started to become calm as the intensity, **tone color** gets mellow and rhythm are very low, reflecting a people that have stayed in a stranger place for a long time, and it started to homesick(Carnovale, 2021). However, it goes crescendo poco a poco and returns to the fortissimo which is able to express a **mood** of happiness from the performance.

In the return A' section that incorporates multiple important themes. In this section, the music had turned from calm **mood** to exuberant mood as the two trumpets interrupted the peoples' minds. Besides that, the violin, trumpet and drum are low **rhythm** but with a high **pitch** when the blues theme reappears which makes a person feel refreshed. It is able to illustrate the **mood** of the protagonist after he met a compatriot, and meeting a compatriot in a foreign land is a happy thing. Therefore, when the blues theme reappears, it will be affected by this emotion. The **tone** that was originally a little sad and sobbing is now full of joy. The "**walking theme**"



then appeared again, and they accompanied the blues and the hustle and bustle of Paris, leading the music to the end. In this section of the music reflects a people that have overcome his spell of depression and once again revels in the sights(Carnovale, 2021).

## 2.2 Music Perception

This song is about an American in Paris, reflecting the mood of people in a foreign country. At the beginning, with the rapid melody, we can feel happiness and excitement in the song. After a while, we can hear the melody of the music gradually slow down, making us feel that the music is expressing a person's homesickness in a foreign country. But after a short while, the melody of the music gradually picked up, which made people feel happy again. This song has obvious theme switching, because this song wants to express a person's feelings in a foreign country.

## **3. Conclusion**

We felt honored as this course gives us an opportunity to appreciate and savor such a marvelous classical music performance. For us, it was a brand new experience listening, watching, and understanding classical music although it was through Youtube. The marvelous performance by the Frankfurt Radio Symphony did bring us into the music and experience the gloriousness of every beat and rhythm played by them. It is undeniable that Music has its own mysterious aura surrounding the environment. Without any voices or languages, the music itself is able to fully express the emotions, feelings, and moods to the audience. Thus, without hesitation, we would like to recommend this excellent performance to everyone around us to share the beauty of classical music.

(1528 words)

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## 5. Appendix

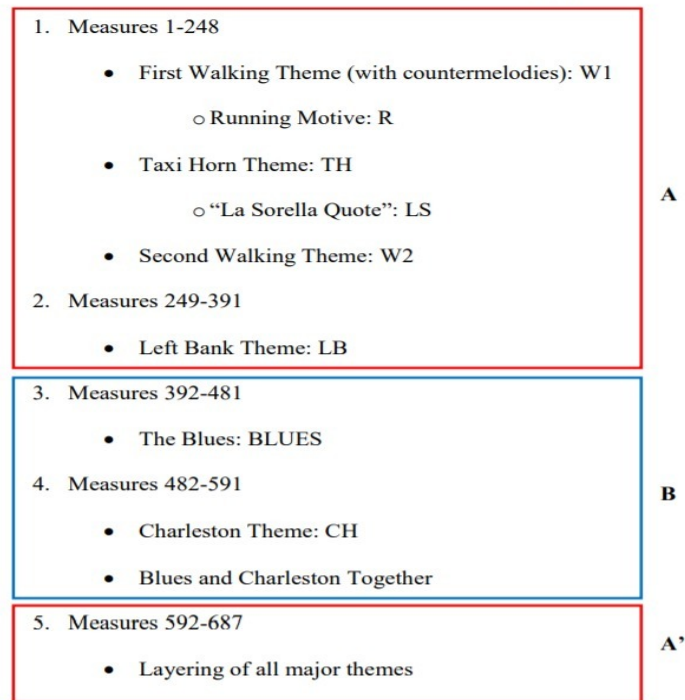


Diagram 5.1: Every themes played in An American in Paris

An American In Paris

Allegretto grazioso

GEORGE GERSHWIN

1st & 2nd Flute

3rd Flute or Piccolo

*p*

Diagram 5.2: Allegretto Grazioso

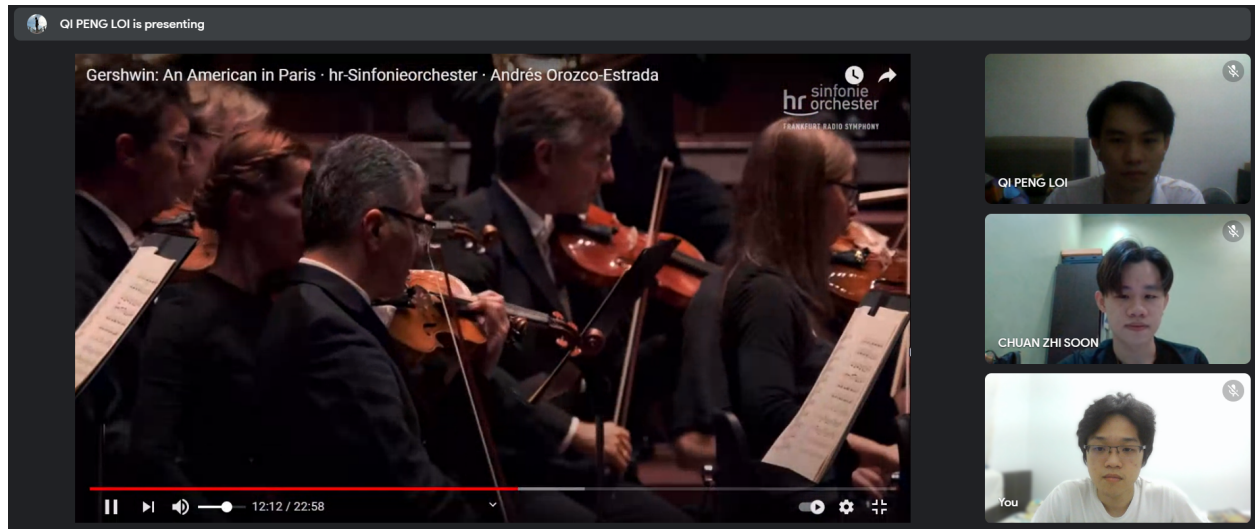


Diagram 5.3: Screenshot of watching the symphony with team members

(<https://youtu.be/K4I2OzMltM4>)

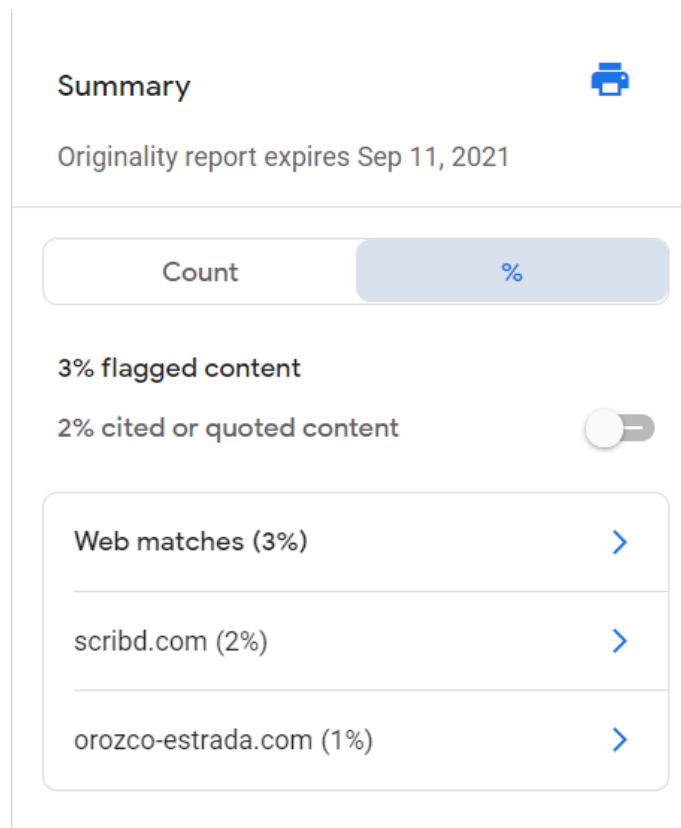


Diagram 5.4: Google Similarity Report