

ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: Modern Expressive Doubling: Generating Patterns in Situations of Extreme Contrast

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Expressive doubling is a concept coined by musicologist Lawrence Kramer that first starts to appear in the Romantic era among authors, painters, and composers. Artists of the times would establish a pattern, then vary it so as to create contrasting perspectives on the art. Notable examples include “Songs of Innocence and Experience” by William Blake or the pair of paintings “Shade and Darkness – the Evening of the Deluge” and “Light and Colour (Goethe’s Theory) – the Morning after the Deluge” by William Turner. Several of Beethoven’s most popular works also used this concept, including his fifth symphony, and his two-movement piano sonatas all used expressive doubling by varying the widely-known sonata form. Due to the temporal nature of music, composers who use this concept will tend to rely on established forms and known patterns more often than what would be seen in other artistic mediums. While a pair of paintings or short poems can be compared several times in the span of a minute, experiencing an entire piano sonata just once can take ten minutes or more, making it more difficult to identify the underlying pattern. However, if a composer can generate a new, recognizable pattern without relying on an existing trope, it should be possible to utilize this concept to create variations on that new pattern. In my piece “A Long Time in a Dark Room”, I attempt, with varying degrees of success, to do just that. The score for the piece is attached as a supplementary document.