

More About MINIMALIST SKETCHES

This composition is meant to introduce young band members--and their audiences--to a significant trend in late 20th century music. Anyone who is acquainted with the works of John Adams, Steve Reich, or especially Philip Glass has encountered minimalism.

In its purest form, minimalism is characterized by relatively static harmony--or slow moving, repeating harmonic patterns--and very repetitive rhythmic figuration with little extended melodic invention, having a somewhat mesmerizing effect on the listener.

Personally, while I do enjoy listening to minimalist music, I am not particularly motivated to write in that genre. But since I wasn't able to track down any minimalist music for middle or young high school bands, I thought that there should be at least one piece available to introduce students to the trend, so I set to work on one. Writing in the style was challenging, yet very interesting for me...but **Minimalist Sketches** is--and will probably remain--my only venture into that genre.

While full-length compositions in this style may challenge young attention spans, the three movements in this piece are short enough to acquaint students with minimalism in a fun and entertaining way. In the exposure that I have personally given it to actual students, I have found their reactions to be quite encouraging. The most frequent comment I have heard is that it reminds them of video game music, which—from their point-of-view—is a definite plus. But since I am not even an occasional gamer, I have little idea what that music is like and less interest in finding out, so I'll just have to take their word for it on that one.