

*Experimental Music Studios*  
*University of Illinois*  
*by Scott Wyatt*

Many of your works display a stasis of similarity within each work. While this may be good for continuity's sake, it does not show clarity with respect to clearly presented motive gestures that are then progressively developed during the course of the work. Much of what I have heard sounds improvised, without appearing to have direction and development.

I ask you to research and clearly define the intent of your proposed composition. With respect to where you are with your pieces, and what I have heard, I urge all of you to visit or revisit research, definitions and intent for your pieces prior to your next studio time.

Please permit me to reiterate and review the following.

**Idea/Intent / Composition/Design**

Idea: concept, thought, notion, impression, plan for action, central meaning behind or that which is driving the composition. This must be clearly defined - at the very least for the composer.

Intent: purpose – what one proposes to accomplish; a clear and defined plan with respect to meaning; that which the audience should understand from one hearing of the composition. This must be clearly defined - at the very least for the composer.

Composition/Design: time-based sonic arrangement with respect to relationship(s) and proportion of events, reiteration of motivic material and/or fragments of motivic material, and progressive development of these motivic ideas in support of the intent of the composition.

**It is my belief compositions should display the following characteristics:**

**Flow** - composed directed forward movement (momentum)

**Direction** - composed guidance to indicate paths of listening and/or comprehension

**Development** - composed progressive evolution of events/gestures/relationships

**Drama** - composed involvement of actions, conflicts, and unanticipated resolutions

In light of the above, after you have revisited definitions and intent of your work, I would suggest you identify your main motivic gestures, contrasting gestures, complimentary gestures, and how these are progressively developed. Is what you have composed so far (gestures and development) - in support of the intent? Does the skeletal framework incorporate Flow, Direction, Development, and Drama - in support of the intent?