Simplicity to *Complexity*

in terms of *line* . . .
What about lines in music?
Line in music

Melody
Vocal or instrumental line
General continuity, direction or process
Texture
“two-part texture”
a drawing by composer Igor Stravinsky
describing his music
Straight line in music?

**DRONE** – constant sustained tone or chord

*Indian sitar music (raga)*

Hildegarde of Bingen
Scales as Line
(but not quite melody)

Examples of musical lines (based on scales) that are musically interesting but not quite what one would call melodies or even melodic

Beethoven, Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op 92, first movement, introduction, 1813

Robert Schumann, Quintet in Eb Major, Opus 44, third movement (scherzo), 1842
Examples of Line in Music

The Concept of Line in Music

Sequence of pitches in time -- often a melody. A line is sometimes referred to as a "voice" in a musical texture, even if it is played by an instrument and is not sung.

**Gregorian chant**
- note fluid melodic line, yet pitches are approached and left with a minimum of gliding or bending

**Vietnamese monochord**
- note the expressive bending of pitch

Analogous to “smooth” line in art?

**Islamic Call to Prayer**
Examples of Line in Music: Bach

Partita No. 3 in E Major, BWV 1006, 1st movement (Prelude), c. 1720
- single melodic line
  (performance by Hilary Hahn on VIOLIN)

**Bach keyboard music with a two-part texture (2 lines)**

French Suite No. 2 in C minor, fourth movement (Air), 1722
  (performance by Glenn Gould)

Bach fugue [video example]
- **fugue** - copies of the same line displaced in time and register
Kenneth Snelson
Rador, 1975
brass & stainless steel
21 x 17 x 6 inches
Examples of Line in Music

**Beethoven, Symphony No. 7** in A Major, Op 92, second movement (1813)
- lines repeated with different lines added each time

**an implied line** (Composite line as a gesture)

Analogous to Jackson Pollock?
Witold Lutoslawski, Symphony No. 3 (1983)
*(conducted by the composer)*
[Witold Lutoslawski, Symphony No. 3 (1983)]

Jackson Pollock, *Lavendar Mist No. 1*, 1950
Lines, what lines?
Mark Tobey, *New York*, 1944, 33x21in. tempera
Looking closer . . .
Tobey, *New York*, detail
Examples of Line in Music

intricately intertwining lines
(performed and recorded by Joan La Barbara)
The concept of line plays a role in compositions of music and art, ranging from the simple to the complex.
Examples of Line in Music


note complexity of line, (subtle) repetition, use of silence
Scales as Line
(but not quite melody)

Example of musical lines (based on scales) that are musically interesting but not quite what one would call melodies

Robert Schumann, Quintet in Eb Major, Opus 44, third movement (scherzo), 1842