



MTO 14.4 Examples: Burns, Lafrance, and Hawley, Musical Expressions of PJ Harvey and Björk

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)

http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.08.14.4/mto.08.14.4.burns_lafrance_hawley.php

Example 1. Lyrical materials and musical materials

Analytic concepts	Lyrical Materials and Strategies	Musical Materials and Strategies
Content	Verbal Content	Sonic Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • elements • context • structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vocabulary, symbols • topics, themes • form, phrase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pitch and rhythm • timbre and texture • phrase and form
Settings	Lyrical Settings	Musical Settings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • voice • story • address 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subject • story and narrative • delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “voice” (vocal and instrumental timbres, arrangement) • form and gesture • mediation
Dynamic Expression	Dynamic Lyrical Expression	Dynamic Musical Expression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subjectivity • attitude • position • intentionality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agency: role, subjectivity • stance: status, perspective • contact: temporality, distance • utterance: action, engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gesture: motion, direction • quality: effects, articulation • interactions: balance, space, texture • intensity: markedness, tension, focus

Example 2. “The Letter,” musical and lyrical content

Formal Section/CD cue	Lyrics (and vocal production emphasis)	Sonic Content	Verbal and Vocal Content
	<p>/ = broken phonation <i>italics</i> = tension (pharyngial stricture) bolditalics = tension with higher rate of air flow - - - - - = raspy = breathy bold = emphasis on stop consonant ~~~~~ = head voice</p>		
<p>Verse 1 00:00-00:17 Tempo 112 4/4 8-bar phrase</p>	<p>Put the pen T<i>o</i> / the <i>paper</i> Press the <i>envelope</i> With my <i>scent</i></p>	<p>Electric Guitar: call and response formula with voice; rhythmic riff that places agogic emphasis on beat 2; enhanced bass frequencies, played through an over-driven amp to create a “warm,” “crunchy” distortion; bass string tuned down from E to low B, to create a “rattle-y” sound</p>	<p>Voice: speech-like, responds to guitar with very basic melodic gestures in syllabic treatment, no melodic sustain; very centered, very focused, forward, dry, no reverb, straight delivery, flat (not bright, not enhanced) tone quality; in the diction the plosives are dense and thick because the low frequencies have not been equalized out Emphasis: Fairly raspy sound with phrase endings featuring pharyngial stricture, and with broken phonation between certain words (/)</p>
<p>Verse 2 00:18-00:33 8-bar phrase</p>	<p>Can't / you see In my <i>handwriting</i> The <i>curve</i> of my <i>g</i>? The <i>longing</i></p>	<p>Electric Guitar: continues as in Verse 1 Bass Drum and Snare: complements electric guitar riff, centered but in background; alternating pattern between bass and snare to create active kit sound High Hat: rhythmic counterpoint to bass drum</p>	<p>Emphasis: Raspiness on “my scent,” “my hand. . .” Emphasis on “curve” through a stronger consonant attack, raspiness on the “of” that follows “curve” and raspiness on “The” in the last line leading to the increased stricture on “longing” which is sustained into the beginning of the Chorus</p>
<p>Bridge 1:42-1:59</p>	<p>I <i>need you</i> The <i>time</i> is <i>running</i> out <i>Oh baby</i> Can't you hear me call?</p>	<p>Electric Guitar: responds to voice with mocking effect—falling B–F sharp alternation in high register Kit: continues with Tambourine as in Chorus</p>	<p>Voice: higher register and greater tension, some use of head voice; rising chromatic melodic motion, directed to B</p>

Chorus 00:34-00:50 two 4-bar phrases	Oh	Guitar: rhythmic chords Bass Guitar: enters in same rhythm as guitar, moves from low tonic B to minor third D. Bass Drum and Snare and High Hat: continue Crash Cymbal: attacks at opening of chorus, and at second phrase Tambourine: steady sixteenths; interacts with the High Hat and the Crash cymbal to create an interesting timbre	Voice: melismatic melodic expression that features sustain and legato; holds scale 5 th (F sharp) from close of V 2 for full bar, then descends with syncopated pattern from flat 5 th (F) through E to 3 rd (D); the F-E-D pattern becomes motivic with the “Oh” phrasing; very long reverb creates large chamber for voice
Verse 3 00:51-1:07	Who / is left That writes these days? But you and me We'll be different	Electric Guitar, Bass Guitar, Bass Drum, Snare and High Hat: as in Verse 2	Voice: as in Verses 1-2; Back-up bass vocal interacts with bass guitar on low B and with voice on E – D gesture
Verse 4 1:08-1:24	Take / the cap Off your pen <i>Wet the envelope</i> <i>Lick and lick it</i>	as in Verse 2	
Chorus 1:25-1:41	Oh	as in Chorus 1	

Link 2:00-2:06		Electric Guitar: material from Verse 1 with Bass Drum, Snare, High Hat: activity from Verse 2	
Verse 5 1:59-2:24	It turns me on To imagine Your blue eyes On my words	as in Verse 1	Voice as in Verses 1-2 Back-up female vocal in mid-register, alternating E – D in straight quarter-note motion while the Voice delivers each line
Verse 6 2:25-2:40	Your <i>beautiful pen</i> <i>Take the cap off</i> <i>Give me a sign</i> And I'd come <i>running</i>	as in Verse 2	Back-up female vocal continues Back-up bass vocal returns, as in Verse 3
Chorus and Outro 2:41-3:16	Oh <i>It's you</i> <i>I want you</i> <i>Oh it's you</i>	as in Chorus 1	Voice in a very high register and high degree of tension for the outro lyrics

Example 3. Transcription of opening verse, "The Letter"

Voice

Put the pen to the pa-per

Guit.

8 Mute with palm 8 Mute 8 8

8 8

press the en-vel-ope with my scent

8 8

Example 4. Transcription of opening Chorus, "The Letter"

Voice

(longing) Oh

Guit.

Bass

H.H. Kit Sn. B.D. Crash Cymbal

Oh Oh

Crash Cymbal

Example 5. Transcription of bridge, "The Letter"

The image displays a musical score for the bridge of the song "The Letter". The score is arranged in two systems, each with five staves. The top staff is for the Voice, the second for Guitar, the third for Bass, the fourth for Tambourine, and the fifth for Drums (labeled as H.H., Sn., and B.D.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: "I need you the time is running out Oh Baby". The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (v) for accents.

Score components and lyrics:

- Voice:** I need you the
- Guitar:** Rhythmic accompaniment with chords and single notes.
- Bass:** Rhythmic accompaniment with chords.
- Tamb.:** Tambourine accompaniment with 'x' marks indicating hits.
- H.H. Sn. B.D.:** Drum kit accompaniment with 'x' marks indicating hits.
- Lyrics:** time is run - ning out Oh Ba - by

can you hear me call

bend

Detailed description: This is a musical score for guitar and voice. It features five staves. The top staff is the vocal line with lyrics 'can you hear me call'. The second staff is the guitar melody, including a 'bend' instruction. The third staff is the bass line. The fourth staff shows guitar fretboard diagrams with 'x' marks for fretted notes and 'v' for vibrato. The fifth staff is the guitar accompaniment, featuring a repeating rhythmic pattern with '7' indicating a seventh fret.

Example 6. Summary of analytic data for “The Letter”

Lyrical Materials and Strategies	Musical Materials and Strategies
<p style="text-align: center;">Verbal Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Vocabulary</i>: concrete materials of writing (pen, paper) combined with sensual actions (press, lick) • <i>Topics, themes</i>: desire expressed across distance through form of a letter • <i>Form, phrase</i>: direct simple statements describing letter in Verse; non-verbal “Oh” in Chorus; statement of appeal in Bridge 	<p style="text-align: center;">Sonic Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pitch</i>: guitar plays with B minor vs B diminished harmonic outline, voice has simple melodic gesture in a narrow range in Verse, an elaborated descending line in Chorus, and a rising higher-pitched line in Bridge • <i>Timbre and texture</i>: over-driven guitar sounds distorted in relation to un-enhanced voice in Verse; more enhancement (reverb) in Chorus and Bridge • <i>Rhythm, phrase, form</i>: playful guitar call and vocal response in Verse; melodic freedom of voice with supporting guitar in Chorus; mocking call with syncopated vocal response in Bridge
<p style="text-align: center;">Lyrical Settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Subject</i>: female subject projecting desire for a distant male • <i>Story and narrative</i>: erotic act of writing a letter to affirm desire and call for response • <i>Delivery</i>: immediate and intimate 	<p style="text-align: center;">Musical Settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Voice</i>: singer’s voice features tension, graininess; guitar is enhanced and over-driven • <i>Form and gesture</i>: call and response in verse, fuller rock texture in chorus, increased intensity of call and response in bridge • <i>Mediation</i>: embodied and dynamic interaction between singer’s edgy, sensual voice and over-driven guitar

Example 7. Transcription of opening break, “Cocoon”

The transcription shows three phrases of a voice melody in 4/4 time, key of B minor. The notes are as follows:

- Phrase 1:** G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter).
- Phrase 2:** D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter).
- Phrase 3:** C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter).

Lyrics for Phrase 1: Who would have known

Lyrics for Phrase 2: H - oo - oo - ah Ha...

Lyrics for Phrase 3: Who Would have Kno - oh-oh - oh - oh - oh-own

Example 8. Transcription of found sounds, "Cocoon"

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "Cocoon". It consists of three systems of staves, each with four staves. The first system is marked with a 4/2 time signature. The second system is marked with a 3/4 time signature. The third system is marked with a 5/4 time signature. The score includes several annotations: "Random interjection" is written above a dashed bracketed section in the first system; "Steady time-keeping pulses" is written above the first two staves of the second system; and "compare" is written below a dashed bracketed section in the third system. The ratio "17:15" is written below a specific musical phrase in both the first and third systems.

Random interjection

17:15

3

Steady time-keeping pulses

5

17:15

compare

Example 9. Transcription of introduction, verse 1 (mm. 9–17) and verse 2 (mm. 21–29), “Cocoon”

Cocoon

Intro

The musical score for the introduction of "Cocoon" is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). It features three staves: Voice, Keyboard (treble and bass clefs), and a second Keyboard staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system shows the beginning of the piece, with the keyboard part starting with a 2-measure motif in the bass clef. The second system continues the keyboard part, with the treble clef staff showing a melodic line starting in the second measure. The key signature is indicated as A^b7.

Voice

Keyboard

2-measure keyboard motif

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

A^b7

5

Musical score for measures 5 and 6. The system consists of two staves: a single treble clef staff and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). Measure 5: Treble clef has a whole rest. Bass clef has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note B2, quarter note C3, quarter note D3, quarter note E3, quarter note F3, quarter note G3, quarter note A3, quarter note B3, quarter note C4, quarter note D4, quarter note E4, quarter note F4, quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Measure 6: Treble clef has a whole rest. Bass clef has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note B2, quarter note C3, quarter note D3, quarter note E3, quarter note F3, quarter note G3, quarter note A3, quarter note B3, quarter note C4, quarter note D4, quarter note E4, quarter note F4, quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. A fermata is placed over the final note in the bass clef of measure 6.

7

Musical score for measures 7 and 8. The system consists of two staves: a single treble clef staff and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). Measure 7: Treble clef has a whole rest. Bass clef has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note B2, quarter note C3, quarter note D3, quarter note E3, quarter note F3, quarter note G3, quarter note A3, quarter note B3, quarter note C4, quarter note D4, quarter note E4, quarter note F4, quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Measure 8: Treble clef has a whole rest. Bass clef has a half note G2, quarter note A2, quarter note B2, quarter note C3, quarter note D3, quarter note E3, quarter note F3, quarter note G3, quarter note A3, quarter note B3, quarter note C4, quarter note D4, quarter note E4, quarter note F4, quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note B4, quarter note C5. A fermata is placed over the final note in the bass clef of measure 8.

Verse 1 Phrase 1 mm. 9-13

9

1 * 2 3 4 1 * 2 3 4

H - oo would have known Th - at a boy like him would have

added 9th open fifth

A^b9

11

1 * 2 3 4 1 * 2 3 4

en - tered me l-igh - tly re - s-tor-ing my bliss - e - e -

fm
triad answers fifth m.9

A^b

Phrase 2 mm. 13-17

13

1 * 2 3 4 1 2 * 3 4

es Who would have known That a b-oy like him

Detailed description: This system contains the first two measures of the musical phrase. The vocal line (treble clef) starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note 'es' (marked with a finger number 1), a quarter note 'Who' (marked with a finger number 1 and an asterisk), a quarter note 'would' (marked with a finger number 2), a quarter note 'have' (marked with a finger number 3), a quarter note 'known' (marked with a finger number 4), a quarter rest, a quarter note 'That' (marked with a finger number 1), a quarter note 'a' (marked with a finger number 2 and an asterisk), a quarter note 'b-oy' (marked with a finger number 3), a quarter note 'like' (marked with a finger number 3), and a quarter note 'him' (marked with a finger number 4). The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a bass line with a quarter note 'es', a quarter note 'Who', a quarter note 'would', a quarter note 'have', a quarter note 'known', a quarter rest, a quarter note 'That', a quarter note 'a', a quarter note 'b-oy', a quarter note 'like', and a quarter note 'him'. The piano part includes a sustained chord in the right hand and a melodic line in the left hand.

15

1 2 * 3 4 1 2 * 3 4

af - ter sh - a - ring my c - o - ore would s - tay go - ing

Detailed description: This system contains the next two measures of the musical phrase. The vocal line (treble clef) starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note 'af' (marked with a finger number 1), a quarter note 'ter' (marked with a finger number 2), a quarter note 'sh' (marked with a finger number 3 and an asterisk), a quarter note 'a' (marked with a finger number 3), a quarter note 'ring' (marked with a finger number 4), a quarter rest, a quarter note 'my' (marked with a finger number 1), a quarter note 'c' (marked with a finger number 2), a quarter note 'o' (marked with a finger number 2 and an asterisk), a quarter note 'ore' (marked with a finger number 3), a quarter rest, a quarter note 'would' (marked with a finger number 3), a quarter note 's' (marked with a finger number 4), a quarter note 'tay' (marked with a finger number 4), a quarter note 'go' (marked with a finger number 4), and a quarter note 'ing' (marked with a finger number 4). The piano accompaniment (grand staff) continues with the bass line and piano accompaniment from the previous system.

17

no - whe - e - ere (whispering)

19

(whispering)

Verse 2

Phrase 1 mm. 21-23

21

H-oo would have kn-own a beau - t-y th-is im -

21

1 2 3 1 2 3 4 5

Phrase 2 mm. 23-25

23

men - se who would have kno - wne a s-ain - t-ly - t-

23

Phrase 3 mm. 25-29

25

ran - ce who would have known m - ir - a - c - u - lous breath

added 4-'quarter note'motif

27

to in - hale a beard l - oa - ded with cou - ou - ou - rage

29

29

Example 10. Transcription of coda, "Cocoon"

Keyboard

The first system of the musical score consists of four measures. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 2/4. The right-hand staff (treble clef) contains rests in the first three measures and a final chord in the fourth measure. The left-hand staff (bass clef) features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns and slurs across the first three measures, and a final chord in the fourth measure.

5

The second system of the musical score consists of four measures, starting at measure 5. The notation is identical to the first system, with rests in the right hand and melodic patterns in the left hand.

9

The third system of the musical score consists of two measures, starting at measure 9. The notation is identical to the previous systems, with rests in the right hand and melodic patterns in the left hand. The system concludes with a double bar line.