



Young People's Chorus of New York City™  
-Presents-

# RADIO RADIANCE™

## BROADCAST LISTENING GUIDE

**"Machaut in the Machine Age VI: Liement me deport"**  
by Eve Beglarian



### Background:

Eve Beglarian's **"Machaut in the Machine Age VI: Liement me deport"** is based on Guillaume de Machaut's (c. 1300 – April 1377) original love poem *Liement me deport* which roughly translates to "I behave as though happy." Machaut's composition is notable as one of the earliest medieval love songs in its expression of contradictory feelings (the language of pain, anguish, "sweet suffering" and elation) that occur when one's heart is broken in love. This theme of being rejected in love (or "*unrequited love*") has a timeless, centuries-long tradition that continues in many forms of music today.

Beglarian's piece sets the first phrase of Machaut's *virelais* (*poem*) in three different rhythmic versions which are sung in canon. There are also three harmonica parts and three clapping parts. The musical structure borrows from Indian traditions of teaching patterns by ear.

Recognizing the benefit of microphone-amplified sound, as they perform, performers focus on the rhythmic aspects of the piece rather than the need to project and amplify their voices. This demonstrates the "non-extreme" of singing intensely to oneself.

In this lesson the concept of "journey" through music (and the many different kinds of journeys one can travel through, via music) are introduced. **"Machaut in the Machine Age**





**VI: Liement me deport**” takes the listener on a journey through time. Through this piece musical elements of the past are combined with today’s technology to create a new rhythmic work for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Lesson Plan for Teachers:



#### Aim:

To introduce students to the newly commissioned work **“Machaut in the Machine Age VI: Liement me deport”** as a means for exploring the concept of **“Something Borrowed, Something New”** in music. This broadcast lesson goes from exploring the *“vocal extreme”* of rhythm and pulse to explore the *“non-extreme”* of singing intensely inwardly.



#### Objective:

Students will be able to:

1. Recognize many of the same musical elements within this new composition (rhythm, pulse, melody, harmony, counterpoint) that they heard in the original Machaut recording of *“Liement me deport.”*
2. Identify some of the same musical phrases that occurred in the original *“Liement me deport,”* and determine what aspect of the original piece might have been “borrowed” to create the new work.
3. Identify which parts of the piece were created by voice, by instrument, or by the addition of technology.
4. Understand how the composer used rhythm, pulse, and interlocking layers that repeat in canon at different rates to create this work.



## **The Lesson and In-Class Activities**

### **Engaging your class:**

1. Share with students the Eve Beglarian's words below:

*"Original work can be created in many different ways. You can create music by combining original notes and phrases never before written or explore working from musical phrases already created as a starting point. Regardless of the form – it could be hip-hop, jazz or anything (I just happened to choose Machaut because that's what I love) it's how you work with it and what you do with it that alters the piece and creates something new."*

2. Ask your students to think about what they've learned about rhythm and pulse from the pre-broadcast lesson. Some things your students should listen for:
  - How does the pulse compare with the original? (*each voice part is in a different meter, so the pulse and downbeats are different within each part*)
  - What creates the percussion? (*hands clapping*)
  - How many voices are there and how do they overlap? (*3 voice parts singing in canon*)
  - Can you identify how technology is used in the piece? (*microphones, processor, etc.*)

### **The Lesson:**

#### **Part 1: Students listen to the broadcast performance (Listening #1).**

1. Have students listen to the WNYC broadcast performance of "*Machaut in the Machine Age VI: Liement me deport,*" listening for rhythm and pulse and evidence of original Machaut work.



2. After the broadcast have a class discussion and ask your students to answer the following questions:
  - Can you identify which part of Beglarian's piece comes from Machaut's?
  - What did the composer add or subtract from the original piece to change it?
  - How do you think technology was used in the creation of this composition and in performance?
  - Do you think the way in which voices sing changes when voices are amplified by microphones?
  - What do you think happens to the voice when microphones take over the burden of projecting out to an audience of listeners?

**Part 2: Students listen to the interviews with the composers.**

1. Have students listen to the interviews with Eve Beglarian.

<http://www.ypc.org/transientglory/radioradiance>

2. After your students have listened to the interview ask your students the following questions:
  - What did you learn from the composer?
  - How did Eve Beglarian's discussion of her work inform your understanding of what rhythm and pulse are and what music is?

**Part 3: Students go back and listen to the performance a second time (Listening #2).**

1. Have students listen to the performance a second time, after having heard the interview with the composer.
2. After your students have listened a second time, ask them the following question:
  - Did your response to the music change after hearing what the composer had to say? Why or why not?



- Did the music sound different to you after learning more background from the composer? If so, how?
- Did you have a better understanding of the piece the second time through? Explain.



### **Summary and Wrap-up:**

- Original music composition can be created in many ways.
- Musical notes and phrases can be “borrowed” from prior works, then changed and organized differently to create something completely new.
- When sounds are organized to different rhythms and pulses from an original piece, a whole new work can be created.
- When technology is added and voices are amplified by microphones, they don’t have to work as hard to project and can therefore work more towards focusing inwardly on rhythm and pulse.
- This “*non-extreme*” takes the voice in the opposite direction from “outward projection” to inward focus.



### **Post-Lesson Activities:**

1. Now that your students understand the “*vocal extreme*” of **pulse**, have them improvise their own “borrowed” composition by choosing melodies, musical phrases or other elements from a piece of music they love.
2. Using their “foundation” piece of music as a start, have your students first work to change one aspect of the work by altering the way that the sounds are organized. Then have them add another instrument (percussion, voice, etc.) to their work. They can combine elements and sounds from a variety of sources, some of which may be completely surprising or unpredictable.