

Classical Music Reference Library



ALEXANDER
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Bb

B (Ger. *H*; Fr., It., Rus., Sp. *Si*). 1. The 7th tone and degree in the diatonic scale of C major. 2. In musical theory, uppercase *B* designates the B-major triad, while lowercase *b* indicates the b-minor triad. 3. In Ger., B-flat. This unique usage makes it possible to render Bach's name in musical notes, since the Ger. *H* corresponds to B-natural (see B-A-C-H). 4. (Abbr.) Bass, basso; *c.B.*, COL BASSO; *b.c.*, BASSO CONTINUO).

B dur (Ger.). B-flat major.

B major. A key of velvety warmth, rich in texture and emotionally ingratiating. The scale of B major, numbering all 5 black keys (F#, C#, G#, D#, A#) and 2 white keys (B, E), is eminently pianistic, but the tonality is not suited for orch.1 works. Only the subdominant of B major is represented by an open string on the violin and double bass. As for brass instruments, they are easier to play in flat keys, which B major certainly is not. Its ENHARMONIC EQUIVALENT, C-flat major, with 7 flats in the key signature, has a certain affini-

B moll (Ger.). B-flat minor.

Babbitt, Milton (Byron), prominent American composer, teacher, and theorist; b. Philadelphia, May 10, 1916. He received his 1st musical training in Jackson, Miss.; revealed an acute flair for mathematical reasoning as well. He studied with Philip James, Marion Bauer, and Roger Sessions. He taught mathematics at Princeton Univ. (1942-45), then music (1948-84); taught at Juilliard School, N.Y. (from 1973); elected a member of the National Inst. of Arts and Letters (1965). For Princeton and Columbia Univs. he inaugurated a Center for Electronic Music with a newly constructed mainframe synthesizer.

Babbitt promulgated a system of melodic and rhythmic sets ultimately leading to (integral) TOTAL SERIALISM. He extended Schoenberg's serial principle to embrace 12 different note values, time intervals between instrumental entries, dynamic levels, and instrumental timbres. In order to describe the potential combinations of the 4 basic aspects of a tone-row, he introduced the term COMBINATORIALITY,