



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

RADIO RADIANCE™

BROADCAST LISTENING GUIDE

"Crosstown M42"

by Robert Kapilow and Fred Newman



Background:

Have you ever traveled across New York City by bus? Composers Robert Kapilow and Fred Newman had the idea of recreating this experience in their new choral work "**Crosstown M42**", written for the Young People's Chorus of New York City's **Radio Radiance™** program. This piece takes the listener on an exciting **journey** through New York City from the west side of Manhattan to the east side via the **Crosstown M42** city bus. But watch out – this is no ordinary bus ride.

A fast-paced multicultural odyssey through New York City's everyday life and culture, "**Crosstown M42**" explores the symphony of sound in the world around us and brings it right to our door. Beginning with sounds of the wind and seagulls on the Hudson River, the listener is taken on a journey past Port Authority, through Times Square and Bryant Park all the way to the East River. Each stop contains a snapshot, or rather an earshot, of the amazing city sounds that are all around us. Complete with beat boxing, steel drums, sitar playing and even every child's favorite, "the Wheels on the Bus," it is an exciting piece that will captivate every listener.

As in the pre-broadcast listening guide, this guide introduces "sound," "musical sound" and "organized sound" as the defining elements of music and challenges listeners to consider **what music really is** as they learn about what happens when sounds are combined. This





guide also introduces and defines the phrase “vocal extreme” as a foundation for teaching students the specific vocal extreme of “imitation” (using the voice to replicate everyday sounds).

The concept of “journey” through music (and the many different kinds of journeys one can travel through, via music) is introduced. “**Crosstown M42**” takes the listener on a literal journey from place to place. In this piece music evokes travel through its harmony and chord changes, themes and motives.

Lesson Plan for Teachers:



Aim:

To introduce students to the newly commissioned work, “**Crosstown M42**”, as a means for exploring the concept of “**Is this music?**” and as the first example of **Radio Radiance™ Innovations in Choral Music: Exploring Vocal Extremes.**



Objective:

Students will be able to:

1. Listen to the broadcast performance of the piece “**Crosstown M42**” and be able to recognize many of the same musical terms within this new composition that they were introduced to in Lesson 1 (sound, music, canon, layer, groove, harmony, mouth sounds artist, extreme)
2. Gain awareness that all sounds in the world around them have the potential to become music when organized into a structure and intended for someone to hear.
3. Understand that the human voice has the capacity to create and imitate a wide and diverse range of sounds and that this represents the vocal extreme of **imitation.**



4. Understand that sounds in the world all around them are the “undiscovered (or yet to be combined) elements” of music and that this world of sounds can be like a “symphony.”



The Lesson and In-Class Activities

Engaging your class:

1. Remind students of the composer’s words below:

“Composer Robert Kapilow describes music as sound that is organized that is intended to be heard.”

2. Ask your students to think about what they’ve learned about sound, organized sound, and music from the pre-broadcast lesson.
3. Explain to students that by listening to this radio broadcast they will be hearing a new innovative choral composition that demonstrates what **music** is, what **organized sound** is, and how the human voice can replicate the sounds we hear.

The Lesson:

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

1. Have students listen to the WNYC broadcast performance of “**Crosstown M42**,” listening for diverse sounds and the ways in which these sounds are organized.
2. After the broadcast have a class discussion and ask your students to answer the following questions:
 - *Name 3 non-music sounds you heard in the composition.*



- *Did you hear a specific style of music in the composition. What are some examples?*
- *Were there any consistent styles or sounds that you heard throughout the piece?*
- *Can you describe a few of the ways in which the sounds are organized within the composition?*

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

1. Have students listen to the interviews with the composers (www.ypc.org)
2. After your students have listened to the interviews have a second class discussion and ask your students the following question:
 - *What did you learn from the composers?*
 - *How did their discussion of their work inform your understanding of what sound is 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 interviews with the composers.
2. After your students have listened a second time, ask them the following questions:
 - *Did your response to the music change after hearing what the composers had to say?*
 - *Was the music different (in your eyes) after learning more background from the composers?*
 - *Was there anything you heard this time that you didn't notice the first time?*



Summary and Wrap-up:

1. All sounds, no matter what they are, can become music if they are organized for someone to hear them.



2. Sounds may be organized in different ways – into rhythms, harmonies, grooves to create music.
3. The voice (as an extreme) can replicate a wide range of sounds and organize them to create music.



Post-Lesson Activities:

1. Now that your students understand the vocal extreme of **imitation**, have them improvise their own **mouth sounds** composition using some of the very sounds that are part of "**Crosstown M42.**"
2. Direct your students to the sound archive on the Young People's Chorus of New York City's Radio Radiance™ website and have them choose from ten different sounds. Have them combine those sounds into "organized sound" to make their own music. They can even add sounds to a song they already know to create something completely new.
3. Take a second field trip and record the sounds you hear on a transportation journey you take with your students. Bring the recording back to class and have your students try replicating the sounds they hear. Next create your own musical composition as a class.



National Standards

1. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
2. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
3. Evaluating music and music performances.



4. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
5. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.