



## *Paper Cut* by Alex Shapiro

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### TABLE OF CONTENTS

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE (CONTINUES ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES)

<a href="#">Introduction &amp; Overview</a> .....	pg 3
Background Information .....	pg 4
• <a href="#">Composer Biography</a>	
• <a href="#">Program Notes</a>	
• <a href="#">Music Timeline</a>	
<a href="#">Glossary</a> .....	pg 9

#### FOLDER 1: LESSON PLANS FOR REHEARSING

1. Introduction to *Paper Cut* Skill Builders
2. Skill Builders: Warm-Ups
  - Paper Rhythm Warm-Up
  - Scale Warm-Up
3. Mini-Lessons to Explore the Concepts and Elements in *Paper Cut*
  - Ostinato
  - Dots & Ties
  - Key Signatures and Tonality

#### FOLDER 2: LESSON PLAN FOR LISTENING & RESPONDING

1. Listen, Reflect & Respond to *Paper Cut*

#### FOLDER 3: LESSON PLANS FOR CREATING MUSIC

1. Composing with Found Objects
2. Creating a Music Composition with an Audio Accompaniment
3. Creating Sounds with Paper

#### **FOLDER 4: LESSON PLANS WITH INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS**

1. Write Your Own Program Notes
2. Music and the Movies
3. Mini-Lessons for Exploring the Context of the Music
  - Meet Composer Alex Shapiro
  - Found Sound, Art & Music
  - Commissioning Process

#### **STUDENT MATERIALS**

Featured readings and worksheets designed to be printed and shared with students can be found throughout this curriculum. They are easily identifiable - each page has a border and contains an image of Rondo, the BandQuest® mascot!



# Teacher's Guide

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## INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

*BandQuest*® was conceived and launched by the American Composers Forum to create new music for middle level bands. In addition to commissioning works by some of today's leading composers, *BandQuest* also provides a rich curriculum with multiple resources for ensembles and music classrooms. This curriculum can be used not only to create ensemble lessons that teach students how to perform the pieces, but also to access interdisciplinary lessons that help students think critically, make connections between the music and other areas of learning, and understand the music they perform through multiple entry points.



The materials were developed using a curriculum planning strategy called the Facets Model (Barrett, McCoy, & Veblen, 1997). The Facets Model is a comprehensive approach for studying musical works in depth, and helping students relate music to other disciplines in meaningful ways. The model has been used to create curriculum in many settings, but especially in designing the content of the *BandQuest* curricula. For in-depth information on the facets model, go the *BandQuest* website at <http://www.composersforum.org/sites/default/files/BandQuestFacetsModel.pdf>.

The materials for each *BandQuest* curriculum can be downloaded. The curriculum for each work includes:

- A Teacher's Guide
- Composer Biography and Program Notes
- Lesson plans for Rehearsing the Music
- Lesson Plans for Guided Listening and Responding
- Lesson Plans for Creating Music
- Lesson Plans with an Interdisciplinary Focus
- Readings for Students
- Assessment Strategies
- Links to other web based resources

*Paper Cut* was composed in 2010 by Alex Shapiro. Working with students in the Friday Harbor Middle School Band in Friday Harbor, WA and director, Janet Olsen, Shapiro created a work with young musicians' interests and taste in mind. *Paper Cut* has echoes of a movie soundtrack through which the players imagine their own dramatic scenes. Students are part of the action with choreographed maneuvers that look as compelling as they sound. In fact, the band members don't even play their instruments until halfway into the piece – instead they “play” paper along with a prerecorded track!

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

### COMPOSER BIOGRAPHY: ALEX SHAPIRO

Born in New York City in 1962 and raised in Manhattan, Alex Shapiro began composing as a nine year old. She attended The Juilliard School and Manhattan School of Music, where she was a composition student of Ursula Mamlok and John Corigliano. Earlier composition studies from age fifteen were with Leo Edwards at Mannes College of Music and with Michael Czajkowski and George Tsontakis at the Aspen Music School. An accomplished pianist, Ms. Shapiro was a student of New York recitalist Marshall Kreisler, and was an active guitarist as well.

Alex's concert music is a diverse, dramatic collection created across a spectrum from chamber groups to large ensembles, and from purely acoustic to works that pair musicians with prerecorded digital audio. A recent concert season included nine premieres of Shapiro commissions, including a groundbreaking suite for electro-acoustic symphonic wind band titled *Immersion* for a consortium of universities led by the University of Minnesota and broadcast nationally on Minnesota Public Radio. Also premiered were a dectet for strings and winds titled *Archipelago* for Chicago's Fifth House Ensemble; *Unabashedly More*, a mixed chamber sextet premiered at Carnegie Hall by the New York ensemble Lunatics at Large; *Slowly, searching* for German pianist Susanne Kessel for her latest CD and concert tour; and *Elegiac*, for clarinet, cello and piano, premiered by Chamber Music San Juans, a Pacific Northwest ensemble which also gave the premiere of Shapiro's *Intermezzo for Cello and Piano* in August 2011.



Photo: Paul Chepikian

*Vendaval de Luvina*, a haunting piece for piano, digital audio and prerecorded spoken word based on a short story by Mexican author Juan Rulfo, was premiered in California by pianist Teresa McCollough, who will gave the California and New York City premieres of Ms. Shapiro's latest solo piano work, *Spark*, in November 2011.

Perhaps the most instantly popular of Ms. Shapiro's newest pieces has been *Paper Cut*, an unusual offering for wind band, prerecorded electronics and printer paper (yes, printer paper), commissioned for the BandQuest series by the American Composers Forum and the National Endowment for the Arts. The piece, distributed by Hal Leonard Corporation, has rapidly become a favorite with high schools and colleges, and has been performed many times throughout the U.S., Canada and Asia. Paper Cut was featured at the December 2011 Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, performed by the VanderCook College of Music Symphonic Band.

An enthusiastic leader in the new music community, Alex is a strong advocate for other artists through her speaking appearances and her published articles. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of The MacDowell Colony, sits on ASCAP's Symphony & Concert Committee, and is the elected concert music composer representative on the ASCAP Board of Review. Ms. Shapiro served on the Board of

Directors of the American Music Center until it merged with Meet the Composer in 2011 to form New Music USA, for which she is now the Chairperson of the Media Council. Alex is the past President of the Board of Directors of the American Composers Forum of Los Angeles, and has also served as an officer on the boards of national music organizations including NACUSA, The College Music Society, and The Society of Composers & Lyricists. Shapiro's volunteer activism extends beyond the music world to additional interests, and includes three terms she served in the 1990's on the Board of Directors of the ACLU of Southern California, including two years as the 30,000-member affiliate's Vice-president. Reflecting an affinity with the ocean that inspires much of her music, Alex is also a Board member of the University of Washington's renowned marine science research facility, the Friday Harbor Laboratories.



Photo: Paul Chepikian

Articulate, passionate and entertaining, Ms. Shapiro appears regularly as a speaker at a wide variety of music events, which have included NARAS' *Grammy® in the Schools*, the Los Angeles Philharmonic's *First Nights* series, IAWM's International Congress of Women in Music, the National Performing Arts Convention in Denver, Colorado, the Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute, and each of ASCAP's *I Create Music* Expos in Hollywood. Since 2000 Alex has interviewed over 100 composers as the moderator of the Los Angeles *Composer's Salon* series as well as ACF/LA's *Composer to Composer* series at Walt Disney Concert Hall, and she is a familiar guest lecturer at many colleges and universities. Alex is especially well versed on the uses of digital media for the promotion of artists' careers, and is a speaker for the ASCAP Composer Career Workshop touring series she co-founded. She recently testified on a Federal Communications Commission panel hearing in Washington, D.C., about broadband access and digital rights issues. Ms. Shapiro is the recipient of national honors and awards including those from the

American Music Center, ASCAP, the American Composers Forum, Meet the Composer and Mu Phi Epsilon, and she has been awarded artist fellowships from The California Arts Council and The MacDowell Colony. In August 2011, Ms. Shapiro was honored with the national music fraternity Mu Phi Epsilon's highest award given to members, the *Award of Merit*, for her inventive use of new technologies in developing her composing career and helping colleagues do the same.

A longtime resident of Malibu, California, Alex now resides on Washington State's San Juan Islands. When she's not composing, she procrastinates on her next piece by communing with the sea life that surrounds her, as seen on her music- and photo-filled nature blog, *Notes from the Kelp*.<sup>\*</sup>

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<sup>\*</sup> From the Alex Shapiro Website, <http://www.alexshapiro.org/ASBio.html>

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

### PROGRAM NOTES FOR *PAPER CUT*

Written by Alex Shapiro

What do teenagers like? Video games, TV, and movies. What do all these media have in common? Music!

I was thrilled to have a chance to add to the educational band music repertoire, thanks to the American Composers Forum's terrific BandQuest® series. In my desire to compose something relevant to younger players, I decided to create a piece that sounds somewhat like a movie soundtrack, to which the musicians can imagine their own dramatic scene. I also thought it would be fun to make the kids themselves part of the action, and so *Paper Cut* has the band doing choreographed maneuvers that look as compelling as they sound. In fact, the band members don't even play their instruments until halfway into the piece.

Music isn't just melody; it's rhythm and texture as well. The unusual element of paper and the myriad sounds that can emerge from something so simple, offer a fresh view of what music-making can be and opens everyone's ears to the sonic possibilities found among everyday objects.

With a nod to environmentalism, *Paper Cut* might even remind people to avoid waste and recycle. Players can collect paper that would have otherwise ended up in the trash, and bring it to rehearsals. The piece might even be therapeutic, as students can take out their aggressions by ripping up bad grades and test scores!

Although *Paper Cut* was composed with middle schoolers in mind, it's also suited to more advanced musicians, since the paper techniques and the skill of playing against a prerecorded track are interesting for all ages. I'm delighted to introduce a new approach to concert wind band repertoire, and I hope that conductors and band members have as much fun with this piece as I had creating it.

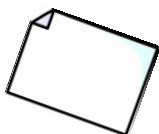
## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
















### PAPER CUT MUSIC TIMELINE

This timeline was created to help students engage in careful listening to details in the music without the score in order to hear the elements and components that make up the music.

























There are THREE key tonal components in the music:

- pre-recorded track (PRT)
- “found sound” paper
- band instruments



Time	Sound Elements	Description
0:00	 & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PRT opens with soft, long, <i>legato</i> bell-like tones</li> <li>• Crumpled <b>paper</b> ball tapped by fingers – then a tearing sound of a full sheet of paper</li> <li>• Sounds mysterious – waiting for something that is going to happen soon...</li> </ul>
0:38		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PRT “slurp” goes into a syncopated ostinato</li> <li>• Long tones continue</li> </ul>
0:49	 & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Legato</i> long tones move into an ascending Theme 1</li> </ul>
1:01		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PRT with long notes</li> <li>• Syncopated ostinato rhythm tapped on paper 4X</li> </ul>
1:11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soft, <i>legato</i> descending melody</li> <li>• Low drum plays a rhythmic cue to set up...</li> </ul>
1:23	 & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Paper</b> playing a new syncopated ostinato pattern 4X. Pattern is in two parts ala call and response. Call made by snapping paper. Response by two firm taps on the paper.</li> </ul>
1:33	 & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PRT plays a 16<sup>th</sup> notes in alternating Major 2<sup>nd</sup></li> <li>• <b>Paper</b> slowly crumpled – drawn out sound – then slowly and quietly torn</li> <li>• Crescendo takes listener to a new theme – <b>paper</b> ripped quickly; ascending 8<sup>th</sup> notes in PRT</li> </ul>
1:46	 & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PRT plays Theme 2 with strong downbeats</li> <li>• <b>Paper</b> plays rhythmic ostinato by ripping paper in short segments</li> <li>• Tension increases with a <i>crescendo</i> and long, crumpled paper sounds</li> </ul>
2:16	 & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While PRT continues, <b>paper</b> plays with new sound – the crumpled balls are rubbed on the floor in a 16<sup>th</sup> note pattern.</li> <li>• Paper <b>STOPS</b></li> </ul>
2:23		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PRT swells with 8<sup>th</sup> note patterns moving upwards</li> </ul>



2:33	 & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over strong downbeats in <b>PRT</b>, bassoon, saxophones, trombones, baritones, vibraphone and snare drums begin playing strong ostinato patterns on repeated pitches.</li> <li>Other band <b>instruments</b> play the theme in half notes. Theme moves mainly upwards.</li> <li>The music in this section swells and ebbs between <i>mezzo forte</i> and <i>forte</i> dynamics. The rolling dynamics keep the energy moving forward in the key middle section.</li> <li>Near the end of the section, more instruments change over to playing the ostinato. Section end <i>fortissimo</i>.</li> </ul>
3:00	 & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>PRT</b> continues</li> <li>Same ostinato continues. Snare drum rim shots move to even 8<sup>th</sup> notes “like a ticking time bomb.”</li> <li>Dynamic level softer for a moment, then swells back to <i>forte</i>.</li> </ul>
3:19	 & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ostinato continues. Some <b>instruments</b> change notes in this section (saxophones, trumpets create a new harmonic sound.)</li> <li>Dynamics continue to build to <i>fortissimo</i> again.</li> </ul>
3:30	 & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ostinato disappears and dynamic level back to <i>mezzo forte</i>.</li> <li>Upper winds play whole note ascending Theme</li> <li>Vibraphone plays even 16<sup>th</sup> notes</li> </ul>
3:40	  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper returns with dotted eighth – 16<sup>th</sup> note pattern.</li> <li>Upper winds and most of the brass continue the melody</li> <li>PRT holds steady with long tones.</li> </ul>
3:52	 &    	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tied whole notes in upper winds and brass; vibraphone back to 16<sup>th</sup> notes; <b>PRT</b> with whole notes.</li> <li>Then dotted 8<sup>th</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> note ostinato returns on <b>paper</b> while half note Theme is played with most of the instruments.</li> </ul>
4:14	  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A familiar ostinato returns played on <b>paper</b> </li> <li>Whole note theme in upper <b>instruments</b> and <b>PRT</b></li> </ul>
4:45	 & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Texture and volume draw back one more time</li> <li><b>Paper</b> torn in strips to make long tied whole notes for 7 measures</li> <li><b>PRT</b> continues; at end of 7 measures, the “slurp” signals the start of the closing section</li> </ul>
5:01	 & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>PRT</b> with long, tied whole notes</li> <li>Electric bass and snare drum build energy with the ostinato</li> <li>More instruments join – suddenly ALL INSTRUMENTS burst forth with two fortissimo measures of the ostinato.</li> </ul>



## *PAPER CUT* GLOSSARY

<b>acoustics</b>	A science that deals with the production, control, transmission, reception, and effects of sound.
<b>alternative music</b>	Term used to describe music that is not played on mainstream radio or consumed by the mainstream audience, or whose music does not fall into any other genre.
<b>call &amp; response</b>	a succession of two clear phrases sung or played by different musicians; the second phrase sounds like a comment or response to the first phrase
<b>commission</b>	(verb) An order for piece of music; (noun) the fee paid to a composer a new musical work.
<b>electronic music</b>	Music that uses electronic instruments and electronic music technology in its production.
<b>experimental music</b>	A mid-20th century compositional tradition of music composed in such a way that its outcome is not predictable; related to “chance” music.
<b>found object art and music</b>	An early 20 <sup>th</sup> century artistic movement in which everyday objects were given a new artistic purpose by artists and musicians.
<b>found sound music</b>	Making music with the natural sound of non-musical objects or sampling or using previously recorded music as part of a new work.
<b>installation art</b>	An artistic genre of three-dimensional art work that is often site-specific and designed to transform the perception of a space.
<b>movie clip</b>	A short section of film from a movie.

<b>ostinato</b>	A repeated rhythm on a repeated or a short melody that is repeated over and over.
<b>origami</b>	The Japanese art of folding paper into objects without cutting, pasting, or decorating.
<b>performance art</b>	A nontraditional art form often with political or topical themes that typically features a live presentation to an audience or onlookers (as on a street) and draws on such arts as acting, poetry, music, dance, or painting.
<b>prerecorded track</b>	An audio recording made ahead of time, to accompany a film, TV show, commercial or a soundtrack intended to be combined with live performance.
<b>sampling</b>	The process of taking a short extract from a recording and mixing it into a different backing track.
<b>sound clip</b>	An excerpt from a longer piece of recorded music.
<b>soundtrack</b>	The audio portion of a film, TV show, or commercial, including music and sound effects.