

Summary of **Force: A Study in Polyrhythm** by Andrew Byrne

The doctoral thesis explores polyrhythmic techniques found in the music of diverse figures of Igor Stravinsky, Elliott Carter, and Philip Glass. It also includes analysis of some of my compositions from 1998.

The paper is organized into three chapters. In Chapter One through a brief analysis and comparison of Elliott Carter's first movement of String Quartet No. 1 and Michael Gordon's *Yo Shakespeare*, basic features of polyrhythmic music are established. In Chapter Two some issues associated with polyrhythmic techniques are discussed: absolute rhythm and heterophony as found in the first movement of Elliott Carter's String Quartet No. 1; additive rhythms and the importance of meter in *Symphonies of Winds* (Igor Stravinsky); and cyclic rhythm in as found in *Einstein on the Beach*, Act I Scene 1 (Philip Glass). In Chapter Three attention turns to some polyrhythmic techniques in my pieces written in 1998. By looking at two pieces in particular (*Force* for choir and instrumental ensemble, and *Piano Music '98* for solo piano), it becomes clear how my compositional approach has incorporated techniques discussed in Chapter Two.