Drone music

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Drone music

Stylistic origins

[Indian classical music](#)

[Experimental music](#)[1]

[Minimalist music](#)[2]

1960s [experimental rock](#)[3]

Typical instruments

[Electronic musical instruments,](#)[guitars](#), [string instruments](#), electronic postproduction equipment

Mainstream popularity

Low, mainly in [ambient](#), [metal](#)and [electronic music](#) fanbases

Fusion genres

[Drone metal](#) (alias Drone doom)

Drone music is a [minimalist musical](#) style[2] that emphasizes the use of [sustained](#) or [repeated](#) sounds, notes, or [tone-clusters](#) – called [drones](#). It is typically characterized by lengthy audio programs with relatively slight harmonic variations throughout each piece compared to other musics. [La Monte Young](#), one of its 1960s originators, defined it in 2000 as "the sustained tone branch of minimalism".[4]

Drone music[5][6] is also known as **drone-based music**,[7] **drone ambient**[8] or **ambient drone**,[9] **dronescape**[10] or the modern alias **dronology**,[11] and often simply as **drone**.

Explorers of drone music since the 1960s have included [Theater of Eternal Music](#) (aka The Dream Syndicate: [La Monte Young](#), [Marian Zazeela](#), [Tony Conrad](#), [Angus Maclise](#), [John Cale](#), et al.), [Charlemagne Palestine](#), [Eliane Radigue](#), [Philip Glass](#), [Kraftwerk](#), [Klaus Schulze](#), [Tangerine Dream](#), [Sonic Youth](#),[Band of Susans](#), [The Velvet Underground](#), [Robert Fripp](#) & [Brian Eno](#), [Steven Wilson](#), [Phill Niblock](#), [Michael Waller](#), [David First](#), [Kyle Bobby Dunn](#), [Robert Rich](#), [Steve Roach](#), [Earth](#), [Rhys Chatham](#), [Coil](#), [If Thousands](#), [John Cage](#), [Labradford](#), [Lawrence Chandler](#), [Stars of the Lid](#), Lattice, [Sonic Boom](#), [Sheila Chandra](#), [Hwyl Nofio](#), [Janek Schaefer](#) and [Sunn O)))](#).

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Overview

Ethnic or spiritual music which contains [drones](#) and is rhythmically still or very slow, called "drone music", [5] can be found in many parts of the world, including bagpipe traditions, among them Scottish[pibroch](#) piping; [didgeridoo](#) music in Australia, South Indian classical [carnatic music](#) and [Hindustani classical music](#) (which is accompanied almost invariably by the [tambura](#), a four-string instrument which is only capable of playing a drone); the sustained tones found in the Japanese [gagaku](#)[12] classical tradition; possibly (disputed) in pre-polyphonic [organum](#) vocal music of late medieval Europe;[13] and the [Byzantine chant](#)'s [ison](#) (or [drone](#)-singing, attested after the fifteenth century).[14] Repetition of tones, supposed to be in imitation of bagpipes,[15][16][17][18] is found in a wide variety of genres and musical forms. However, the lineage of stillness and long tones occurring in [classical](#) compositions during adagio movements, including, for instance, the third movement of [Anton Webern](#)'s *Five Small Pieces for Orchestra*, as well as in Northern European folk musics in the form of "slow airs" has directly descended into modern popular and electronic music.

The modern genre also called drone music[6][19] (called "dronology" by some books, labels and stores, [20] to differentiate it from ethnic drone-based music) is often applied to artists who have allied themselves closely with [underground music](#) and the [post-rock](#) or [experimental music](#) genres.[3] Drone music also fits into the genres of [found sound](#), [minimalist music](#),[2] [dark ambient](#), [drone doom](#)/drone metal, and [noise music](#). Most often utilizing electronic instruments or electronic processing of acoustic instruments, they typically create dense and unmoving harmonies and a stilled or "hovering" sense of time. While the hallmarks of drone music are easy to recognize, the backgrounds and goals of the artists vary greatly.

[Pitchfork Media](#) and [Allmusic](#) journalist Mark Richardson defined it thus: "The vanishing-point music created by drone elders Phill Niblock and, especially, LaMonte Young is what happens when a fixation on held tones reaches a tipping point. Timbre is reduced to either a single clear instrument or a sine wave, silence disappears completely, and the base-level interaction between small clusters of "pure" tone becomes the music's content. This kind of work takes what typically helps us to distinguish "music" from "sound," discards nearly all of it, and then starts over again from scratch."[21]

As summarized in a review, "Drone music is about as far away from music as you can get before it stops being music [...] In the beginning, there was the word, and the word was oooooommmmmmm. God was, apparently, a drone music pioneer, and there is something religious about this music... or rather, something spiritual."[22]

[edit]
La Monte Young and the Theater of Eternal Music

[La Monte Young](#), fascinated with "the sound of the wind blowing", the "60 cycle per second drone" of "step-down transformers on telephone poles", the *tanpura* drone and the *alap* of [Indian classical music](#), "certain static aspects of [serialism](#), as in the [Webern](#) slow movement of the Symphony Opus 21", and

Japanese *gagaku* "which has sustained tones in it in the instruments such as the Sho",[23]started writing music incorporating sustained tones in 1957 with the middle section of *Four Brass*,[23] then in 1958 what he describes as "the first work in the history of music that is completely composed of long sustained tones and silences"[23] with *Trio for Strings*, before exploring this drone music within the Theater of Eternal Music that he founded in 1962.

The Theater of Eternal Music is a multi-media performance group who, in its 1960s–1970s heyday included at various times La Monte Young, Marian Zazeela, Tony Conrad, Angus MacLise, Terry Jennings, John Cale, Billy Name, Jon Hassell, Alex Dea and others, each from various backgrounds (classical composition and performance, painting, mathematics, poetry, jazz, etc.). Operating from the world of lofts and galleries in New York in the mid-sixties to the mid-seventies in particular, and tied to the aesthetics of Fluxus and the post-John Cage-continuum, the group gave performances on the East Coast of the United States as well as in Western Europe comprised long periods of sensory innundation with combinations of harmonic relationships, which moved slowly from one to the next by means of "laws" laid out by Young regarding "allowable" sequences and simultaneities, perhaps in imitation of Hindustani classical music which he, Zazeela and the others either studied or at least admired.[24] The group released nothing during their lifetime (although Young and Zazeela issued a collaborative LP in 1969,[25] and Young contributed in 1970 one side of a flexi-disc accompanying*Aspen magazine*[26]). The concerts themselves were influential on their own upon the art world including Karlheinz Stockhausen (whose *Stimmung* bears their influence most strikingly)[27][28] and the drone-based minimalist works of dozens of other composers many of whom made parallel innovations including Young classmate Pauline Oliveros, or Eliane Radigue, Charlemagne Palestine, Yoshi Wada, Phill Niblock and many others.[29] Then group member John Cale went on to extend and popularize this work into 1960s rock music with the Velvet Underground (along with songwriter Lou Reed).

In 2000, La Monte Young wrote: "[About] the style of music that I originated, I believe that the sustained tone branch of minimalism, also known as "drone music," is a fertile area for exploration."[4]

[edit]
John Cale and the Velvet Underground

The combination of Cale's grinding viola drone with Reed's two-chord guitar figure of the Velvet Underground's song "Heroin" on their first album, *The Velvet Underground & Nico* (1967) laid the foundation for drone music as a rock music genre in close proximity to the art-world project of the Theatre of Eternal Music.[3] Cale's departure from the group in 1968 blurred matters considerably, as Reed continued to play primitive figures (sometimes in reference to R&B), while Cale went quickly on to produce the Stooges' debut (1969), including his viola drone on the track "We Will Fall" and Nico's *The Marble Index* (1969) which also included Cale's viola drone on "Frozen Warnings". Later, Lou Reed issued in 1975 a double LP of multi-tracked electric-guitar feedback titled *Metal Machine Music* which listed (misspelling included) "Drone cognizance and harmonic possibilities vis a vis Lamont Young's Dream Music"[30] among its "Specifications".

[edit]
George Harrison and the Beatles

Several songs by The Beatles, the most popular and influential group of the 1960s, include drones. Drawing on George Harrison's studies and friendship with Hindustani classical sitarist, Ravi Shankar, from 1966's *Love You To* through 1967's *The Inner Light*, many of Harrison's compositions include the

tambura, an instrument dedicated in Indian music to harmonic stasis. John Lennon's *Tomorrow Never Knows*, a quasi-mystical song based around text from the Tibetan Book of the Dead also includes the tambura and is sung around a pedal-point drone, as in medieval Western liturgical music.[31]

[edit]
Krautrock

In the late sixties and early seventies German rock musicians including Can, Neu! and Faust drew from the heritage of experimental sixties rock like the Beatles at their most collagic and jamming as well as from composers like Stockhausen and La Monte Young.[32] These groups became influential on art-rock contemporaries in their own day and punk-rock and post-punk players subsequently.[33][34] Tony Conrad, of the Theater of Eternal Music, notably made a collaborative LP with Faust which included nothing but two sides of complex violin drones accompanied only by a single note on bass guitar and a bloody-minded percussion accompaniment. Single-note bass-lines were also featured on Can's track "Mother Sky" (album *Soundtracks*, 1970) and the entirety of Die Krupp's first album (1979).

[edit]
New age, cosmic and ambient music

Parallel to Krautrock's rockist impulses, across North America and Europe, some musicians sought to reconcile Asian classicalism, austere minimalism and folk music's consonant aspects in the service of spiritualism. Among them was Theater of Eternal Music alumnus Terry Riley with his 1964 *In C* [35][36] and who had become a disciple, along with Young and Zazeela, of the Hindustani classical singer Pandit Pran Nath. In parallel, then-Krautrock band Tangerine Dream and their recently departed member Klaus Schulze both moved toward a more contemplative and consonant harmonic music, each releasing their own drone music album on the label Ohr in August 1972 (*Zeit* and *Irrlicht*, respectively). Meanwhile, as increasingly elaborate studio technology was born during the seventies,Brian Eno, an alumn of the glam/art-rock band Roxy Music postulated ambient music (drawing, in part from John Cage and his antecedent Erik Satie's 1910s concept of furniture music, in part from minimalists such as La Monte Young)[37] as "able to accommodate many levels of listening attention without enforcing one in particular; it must be as ignorable as it is interesting".[38] While his late seventies ambient tape-music recordings are not drone music, his acknowledgment of Young ("the daddy of us all")[39] and his influence on later drone music made him an undeniable link in the chain.

[edit]
Shoegaze and indie-drone

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Cocteau Twins, Coil, My Bloody Valentine, Slowdive, The Jesus and Mary Chain, Ride, Loop (who covered Can's "Mother Sky"), Brian Jonestown Massacre (*Methodrone* album) and Spacemen 3 (who used a text by Young for the liner notes to their record *Dreamweapon: An Evening of Contemporary Sitar Music*, a live 45-minute drone piece[40]) reasserted the influence of the Velvet Underground and its

antecedents in their use of overwhelming volume and hovering sounds, while Sonic Youth quite often prolong notes to add more droning in their songs.

[edit]
Electronics and metal

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, drone music was intermixed with rock, ambient, dark ambient, electronic and new-age music. Many drone music originators, including Phill Niblock, Eliane Radigue andLa Monte Young are still active and continute to work exclusively in long, sustained tones. Improvisors like Hototogisu and Sunroof! play nothing but sustained fields which are close to drones. Sunn O))), a drone metal band, almost exclusively plays sustained tone pieces, and their peers Merzbow and Boris released a collaborative 62-minute drone piece called *Sun Baked Snow Cave* in 2005. At times colloquialized as droan, this post-metal genre continues with many contemporary projects, such as Gygax on 12th Records.[41]

[edit]
Examples

Main article: List of drone artists
Some notable examples include, chronologically:

- Yves Klein: as a precedent, his 1949 *Monotone Symphony* (formally *The Monotone-Silence Symphony*, conceived 1947–1948) is an orchestral 40-minute piece whose first movement is an unvarying 20-minute drone (the second and last movement being a 20-minute silence).[42][43]
- La Monte Young's 1958 *Trio for Strings*, that he describes as "the first work in the history of music that is completely composed of long sustained tones and silences."[23]
- Giacinto Scelsi's 1959 piece *Quattro pezzi su una nota sola* for one pitch and numerous subsequent pieces by himself and his followers and contemporaries in the realm of spectral composition.
- La Monte Young's 1960s drone-based pieces, solo and with John Cale, Tony Conrad, Marian Zazeela, Terry Riley, Angus MacLise, Terry Jennings and/or Billy Name in the Theater of Eternal Music(aka The Dream Syndicate), including: *Day of Niagara: Inside the Dream Syndicate, Vol. I* (1965/2000).
- The "free form freakout" leading into The Red Crayola's "Pink Stainless Tale" from their *Parable of Arable Land* album (1967).
- Late 1960s–1980s work by minimal composers and gallery artists Yoshimasa Wada (*The Rise and Fall of the Elephantine Serpentine*), John Cale (*Sun Blindness Music*, 1965–1968/2001; *Dream Interpretation: Inside the Dream Syndicate, Vol. II*, 1965–1968/2001; *Stainless Gamelan: Inside the Dream Syndicate, Vol. III*, 1965-1968/2002), Tony Conrad solo (*Joan of Arc*, 1968/2006) and withFaust (*Outside the Dream Syndicate*, 1973; *Outside the Dream Syndicate Alive*, 1995/2005), Terry Fox (*Berlino*), Harry Bertoia, Jon Gibson (*Two Solo Pieces*), Charlemagne Palestine (*In Mid Air*, 1967–1970/2003; *Four Manifestations on Six Elements*, 1974/1996; *Schlingen-Blängen*, 1988/1999), David Hykes (*Hearing Solar Winds*), Pauline Oliveros (*Horse Sings From Cloud*), Alvin Lucier(*Music on a Long, Thin Wire*), Harley Gaber (*The Wind Rises in the North*), Stuart Dempster (*In the Great Abbey of Clement VI*), and Remko Scha (*Machine Guitars*), to name only a few. All used long, sustained and timbrally dense harmonic material for the entirety of various of their pieces.

- Philip Glass: within the 61-minute *Music with Changing Parts*(fr) (1970, recorded 1971, issued 1973)[44] parts 1-2 and 4 (on original LP; single-track CD has them around 0-16, 16-36, and 50-61 mins) are based around drones from wind instruments and sustained voices, rythmed with a slowly-evolving whirlwind of electric organ (which goes solo on the non-drone part 3).
- Kraftwerk's experimental/drone self-titled first album *Kraftwerk* (1970): the 4-minute intro to "Stratovarius", the organ drone on most of "Megaherz", the first half of "Vom Himmel Hoch".
- Harold Budd's 1970 experimental drone pieces "The Oak of the Golden Dreams" and "Coeur D'Orr" on *The Oak of the Golden Dreams*.
- Klaus Schulze's early "organ drone" albums *Irrlicht* (1972),[45] and to a lesser extent the mix of drone and space on *Cyborg* (1973)[46] (the organ drone track "Synphära", the cello drone track "Chromengel").
- Tangerine Dream's ambient drone album *Zeit* (1972), and to a lesser extent the mix of drone ambient and space music on *Phaedra* (1974).
- Fripp and Eno: the 21-minute drone ambient of "The Heavenly Music Corporation" on *No Pussyfooting* (1973), the 28-minute drone ambient of "An Index of Metals" on *Evening Star* (1975). Fripp revisited guitar drone in 1998 with the 3-minute intro of "Sus-tayn-Z" (a play on "sustains") from the *Live Groove* album of King Crimson's ProjeKct Two.
- On Miles Davis' *Agharta* (1975): the last 6 minutes of the last track, especially the last 2 minutes.
- Jon Hassell's *Vernal Equinox* (1977)
- Jean-Claude Éloy's *Shânti* (Peace) from 1973, for electronic and concrete sounds, recorded at the WDR Electronic Music Studio in Cologne with an entire length of approximately 2 hours and *Gaku-no-Michi* (The Ways Of Music) from 1978, a film without images for electronic and concrete sounds, recordet at NHK Electronic Music Studio in Tokyo with a length of 4 hours.
- Robert Rich's early albums *Sunyata* (1982), *Trances* (1983), *Drones* (1983).
- Steve Roach: the drone ambient album *Structures from Silence* (1984).
- Coil's drone music albums *How to Destroy Angels* EP (1984) and *How to Destroy Angels (Remixes and Re-Recordings)* LP (1992), *Time Machines* (1998), and to a lesser extent *ANS* (2003). Plus many tracks on non-drone albums, such as "Tenderness of Wolves" on *Scatology* (1984), "Wrim Wram Wrom" on *Stolen and Contaminated Songs* (1992), "Cold Dream of an Earth Star" and "Die Wolfe Kommen Zuruck" on *Black Light District: A Thousand Lights in a Darkened Room* (1996), "North" on *Moon's Milk* (1998 singles). (Plus many semi-drone tracks such as "Her Friends the Wolves...", "Moon's Milk or Under an Unquiet Skull Part 1", "Bee Stings", "Refusal of Leave to Land", "Magnetic North", etc.)
- Vidna Obmana: half of *Noise/Drone Anthology* (1984-1989/2004), the drone-ambient album *Soundtrack for the Aquarium*[47] (1992/2001), and the drone ambient "night disc" (percussionless disc two) of *Well of Souls*[48] (1995, with Steve Roach).
- John Cage: the 23-minute strings piece "Twenty-Three"[49] (late 1980s).
- On Aphex Twin's *Selected Ambient Works Volume II* (1994): especially "[spots]" and "[tassels]", and to a lesser degree tracks such as "[tree]", "[parallel stripes]", "[grey stripe]", and "[white blur 2]".
- Labradford: the drone ambient album *Prazision LP* (1993), and to a lesser extent a few drone-rock tracks on *A Stable Reference* (1995) and *Labradford* (1996).
- Kyle Bobby Dunn and his patient drones for electric guitar and chamber instruments are full of movement and detail, yet throughout all the tiny changes, an uncanny stillness prevails. Nearly two hours of minimal, lulling and romantic drone on the double album, *A Young Person's Guide to Kyle Bobby Dunn*.[50] "Going down in history as a master of 21st century minimalist

drone." [51]Sedimental has been following Dunn's sensitive and world-wise drone works closely for many years. "…there's an austere classical air to Dunn's compositions, recalling the geometry of cathedral domes and the interlaced ribs of vaulted ceilings." - *The Wire Magazine* [52]

- Stars of the Lid (described as "Austin drone stars" in 1995[53]): the overwhelming majority of their work, from *Music for Nitrous Oxide* (1995) and *Gravitational Pull vs. the Desire for an Aquatic Life*(1996) to the more classical-tinged *The Tired Sounds of Stars of the Lid* (2001) and *Stars of the Lid and Their Refinement of the Decline* (2007).
- Mystical Sun: the drone ambient album *Primordial Atmospheres* (1994), especially the track *Journey to Samadhi* which fuses 33 minute drones with binrual beats.
- Sheila Chandra's album *ABoneCroneDrone* (1996) consists of minimalist vocal phrases over complex electronic drones combined with acoustic drones. She found melodies inherent within theharmonics of the drones, so that the music was incomplete without the listeners finding their own melodies arising from the drones, as she invited the listeners to be creators.[54] She continued this approach onto her next album, *This Sentence Is True (The Previous Sentence Is False)*. This work developed from her previous explorations based in Indian music using drones such as the tambura.
- Bowery Electric's "Postscript" on the album *Beat* (1996).
- Gescom (a side-project of Autechre): the experimental album *Minidisc* (1998) is half drone ambient (tracks "Cranusberg [1-3]", "Fully [1-2]", "Shoegazer", "Polarized Beam Splitter [1-5]", "Dan Dan Dan [1-4]", "A Newer Beginning [1-2]", "Go On", and to a lesser degree "Interchangeable World [1-3]", "Yo! DMX Crew", "New Contact Lense", "1D Shapethrower", "Inter", "Of Our Time", or the drone techno of "Pricks [1-4]").
- Radiohead's "Treefingers" (on the album *Kid A*, 2000) is a cross of drone ambient and space music.
- Biosphere : half of his ambient/drone album *Shenzhou* (2002), and his drone album *Autour de la Lune* (2004).
- Boards of Canada : the drone ambient of "Corsair" on *Geogaddi* (2002).
- Wilco's album *A Ghost Is Born* (2004) contains "Less Than You Think", a 15-minute track containing ~12 minutes of droning ambience after a brief piano-based melody.
- Contemporary drone composers such as Phill Niblock, Leif Elggren, Eliane Radigue
- Dark ambient, noise music, post-industrial music and improvised music bands and projects involved with drone music include Autopsia, Die Krupps, KK Null, Zoviet France, Matthew Bower's Hototogisu, C.C.C.C., Merzbow, Wapstan.
- Other contemporary bands representative of this genre include Maeror Tri, Children of the Drone, Windy & Carl, Troum, Mirko Uhlig, House of Low Culture, Growing, Cisfinitum, Hwyl Nofio, and ElehSome important hearths for bands in the genre include Soleilmoon or Drone Records.
- "The Barometric Sea" by Deepspace is drone-based, taking in many ambient and drone influences.
- The Music of Stray Ghost is mostly drone-influenced, and showcases a blurring between classical string sounds and drones.
- Most of Bethany Curve's songs are drone-based, made only with guitars.
- Erik Wøllo: the electronic drone ambient album *The Polar Drones* (2003).
- Steven Wilson's side project, Bass Communion, uses drone, noise, supernatural, and ambient textures. Wilson's solo debut *Insurgentes* (2008) also contains various drone and noise elements throughout.

- If Thousands' album "Lullaby" (2003) is intended to aid slumber through the use of keyboards, guitars, and field recordings to build up a captivating atmosphere that mimics a state of near-sleep.
- Janek Schaefer's 'Local Radio Orchestra' for 12 x digital audio players, 24 x short range FM transmitters, and 12 x portable FM Radios, broadcasting a drone ensemble across the entire FM dial for you to tune out and tune in.

[edit]
See also

- Drone metal alias Drone doom - a subgenre of heavy metal and doom metal
- Space music - some drone music also fall inside this umbrella genre

[edit]
Notes

1. **^** From experimental music, not ambient music: Although drone is now seen as a subgenre of both Minimalism and Ambient, Ambient came in part from Drone, not the other way around (cf. below citations of Cook & Pople 2004, p. 502, and ambient founder Eno's quote about Young)

2. ^ *a b c* Cox & Warner 2004, p. 301 (in "Thankless Attempts at a Definition of Minimalism" by Kyle Gann): "Certainly many of the most famous minimalist pieces relied on a motoric 8th-note beat, although there were also several composers like Young and Niblock interested in drones with no beat at all. [...] Perhaps "steady-beat-minimalism" is a criterion that could divide the minimalist repertoire into two mutually exclusive bodies of music, pulse-based music versus drone-based music."

3. ^ *a b c* Cox & Warner 2004, p. 359 (in "Post-Rock" by Simon Reynolds): "The Velvets melded folkadelic songcraft with a wall-of-noise aesthetic that was half Phil Spector, half La Monte Young—and thereby invented dronology, a term that loosely describes 50 per cent of today's post-rock activity." (about the Velvet Underground and post-rock)

4. ^ *a b* Young 2000, p. 27

5. ^ *a b* Early use of "drone music" as an ethnic or spiritual, drone-based music can be found such as in 1958 (American Musicological Society, *JAMS (Journal of the American Musicological Society*), 1958, p. 255: "Remarks such as those on drone effects produced by double pipes with an unequal number of holes provoke thoughts about the mystery of drone music in antiquity and about primitive polyphony.") or 1972 (Barry S. Brook & al., *Perspectives in Musicology*, W. W. Norton, 1972, ISBN 0-393-02142-4, p. 85: "My third example of the force

of tradition concerns another large problem, the persistence of drone music from the Middle Ages to the present day.")

6. ^ *a b* Early use of "drone music" as a non-ethnic, new or experimental genre can be found such as in 1974 (Michael Nyman, *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond*, Studio Vista, 1974, ISBN 0-02-871200-5, p. 20: "[...] LaMonte Young's drone music [...]") or again 1974 (cf. "drone-music" in the Hitchcock 1974 quote about Riley)

7. ^ "Drone-based music" is used for instance in 1995 (Paul Griffiths, *Modern music and after: Directions Since 1945*, Oxford University Press, 1995, ISBN 0-19-816511-0, p. 209: "Young founded his own performing group, the Theatre of Eternal Music, to give performances of highly repetitive, drone-based music"), or in Cow & Warner 2004 (cf. cited quote of p. 301).

8. ^ "Drone ambient" is used for instance on Allmusic, such as in the review of *Soundtrack for the Aquarium* ("representative of the drone ambient side of his work").[1]

9. ^ "Ambient drone" is used for instance on Allmusic (and thus mirrored on VH1, Amazon, etc.), such as in the biography of Stars of the Lid ("Ambient drone duo Stars of the Lid")[2] or de:Mathias Grassow ("widely recognized as 'the King of the Ambient Drone' ")[3] or on PopMatters("experimental no-man's-lands like ambient drone"[4], "seminal works of ambient drone"[5]).

10. ^ "Dronescape" is used for instance on Allmusic, such as in the review of *New York Noise, Vol. 2*("one of Sonic Youth's first known recordings, the dronescape 'I Dreamed I Dream,' ")[6]

11. ^ The independent record store Aquarius Records, in this catalog page (Archive.org copy of 2002), claims: "*Here at Aquarius, we've coined such neologisms as "dronology" and "fuckery", simply because we hope that such words offer enough connotation even without a lot of context.*"

12. ^ A precedent directly cited by La Monte Young, see his quote below (Zuckerman 2002).

13. ^ Speculated in 1988 by French musicologist Marcel Pérès of Ensemble Organum (as summarizedhere) but disputed in a master thesis (Robert Howe, "The Performance of Mediæval Music in Contemporary Culture", PDF file, p. 6-8)

14. ^ "there is no clear testimony to the use of the ison until after the fifteenth century" (in St. Anthony's Monastery, "Introduction to Byzantine Chant", p. 1). Elsewhere is specified: "The earliest notification of the custom appears to have

been made in 1584 by the German traveller, Martin Crusius." (in Dimitri E. Conomos (Oxford University), "A Brief Survey of the History of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Chant", section "7. Post-Byzantine Era")

15. ^ Rosamond E. M. Harding, *Origins of Musical Time and Expression*, Oxford University Press, 1938, Part 2 "Studies in the imitation of musical instruments by other instruments and by voices", p.42-43: "IMITATION OF BAGPIPES: Bagpipes may be called a world-instrument, since they are found in most parts of the world. They are also of considerable antiquity, being known to the ancient Egyptians. [...] There are three characteristics of Bagpipe imitations all three of which may be present at the same time and any one of which is sufficient to characterize Bagpipe influence, if not a direct imitation. The first is the drone, usually placed in the bass, and consisting of one note alone or of two or three notes played together. A drone consisting of two adjacent notes sounded alternately is also typical. Dr. Naylor, in his work *An Elizabethan Virginal Book*, has drawn attention to the fact that many early English melodies are founded on a drone consisting of two alternating notes, and that the Northumbrian Bagpipe had alternative drones and an arrangement for changing the note of the drones."

16. ^ George Grove, Stanley Sadie, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Macmillan Publishers, 1st ed., 1980 (ISBN 0-333-23111-2), vol. 7 (Fuchs to Gyuzelev), "André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry", p. 708: "in *L'épreuve villageoise*, where the various folk elements - couplet form, simplicity of style, straightforward rhythm, drone bass in imitation of bagpipes - combine to express at once ingenuous coquetry and sincerity."

17. ^ Leroy Ostransky, *Perspectives on Music*, Prentice-Hall, 1963, p. 141: "GAVOTTE. A dance consisting of two lively strains in 4/4 time, usually with an upbeat of two quarter-notes. It sometimes alternates with a musette, which is a gavotte over a drone bass, an imitation of bagpipes."

18. ^ David Wyn Jones, *Music in Eighteenth-Century Austria*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, ISBN 0-521-02859-0, p. 117: "Table 5.1 - Pastoral traits in eighteenth-century masses [...] II - Harmony: A) Drones in imitation of bagpipes"

19. ^ "drone music" is also used in *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-century Music* (cf. Cook & Pople 2004, p. 551, about the Theatre of Eternal Music: "his drone music [...] Young went on to develop this early drone music into intricate and extended compositions") or on Pitchfork Media ("During that time I wanted my drone music to have as prickly an edge as possible"[7]).

20. **^** "Dronology" is used for instance as a genre tag at Aquarius Records (who claim they coined it[8]), Chemical Records[9], Epitonic.com [10], and Last.fm[11].

21. **^** Mark Richardson, "Stars of the Lid: And Their Refinement of the Decline" review, April 3, 2007, www.pitchforkmedia.com

22. **^** Callum Zeff, "The Dream Syndicate" (Archive.org copy of 2003) — A review that's also an overview of drone music.

23. ^ *a b c d* Zuckerman 2002.

24. **^** Young, Zazeela, and Hindustani classical music: Mela Foundation, "Pandit Pran Nath Memorial Tributes", www.melafoundation.org (quoting *The Eye*, the SPIC MACAY (Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music and Culture Amongst Youth) quarterly magazine): "He [Young] is a master of Hindustani classical music. La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela, founders of the MELA Foundation Dream House in New York are responsible for having single-handedly introduced vocal Hindustani classical music to America. In 1970 when they brought renowned master vocalist Pandit Pran Nath of the Kirana Gharana to the U.S. and became his first Western disciples, studying with him for twenty-six years in the traditional gurukula manner of living with the guru, [...]"

25. **^** La Monte Young & Marian Zazeela, vinyl LP (limited to 2800 copies) dubbed *The Black Record*(1969), Munich: Edition X, featuring two side-long compositions.[12][13]

26. **^** Flexi-disc "Jackson MacLow / La Monte Young", Side B: credited "Drift Study 31 1 69 by La Monte Young" (full title is "Excerpt from Drift Study 31 I 69 12:17:33 - 12:49:58 PM",[14] from its recording date and time), accompanying Young's article "Notes on Continuous Periodic Composite Sound Waveform Environment Realizations", in Aspen no. 8 "The Fluxus Issue", New York: Aspen Communications Inc., NYC., Fall-Winter, 1970-1971.

27. **^** Potter 2002, p. 89: "[Young's] influence on already established composers who were themselves his student mentors is not, however, confined to Cage. Karlheinz Stockhausen's exploration of the harmonic series, notably in *Stimmung* (1968), has often been linked to Young's example. [...] The German composer seems to have visited Young and Zazeela when in New York, in 1964 or 1965, and listened to a rehearsal of The Theatre of Eternal Music. He requested tapes of the group's performances which, perhaps surprisingly, Young gave him. Stockhausen's own musicians visited Young and Zazeela's Dream House installation in Antwerp in 1969."

28. ^ Steve Reich, *Writings on Music, 1965-2000* (ed. by Paul Hillier), Oxford University Press US, 2002, ISBN 0-19-511171-0, p. 202: "I didn't hear any of Feldman's music until 1962, when I heard a piece of Stockhausen's called *Refrain*. I only realized later that this was Stockhausen's "Feldman piece" just as *Stimmung* was his "LaMonte Young piece"."

29. ^ Cox & Warner 2004, p. 401 ("Chronology" of key dates): "1964 [...] Young, Marian Zazeela, John Cale, Angus MacLise, and Tony Conrad form the Theatre of Eternal Music, the foundation of drone-based minimalism;"

30. ^ Lou Reed, *Metal Machine Music* (1975), double vinyl LP, RCA Records (CPL2-1101), "Specifications": text copy, image copy (reissue).

31. ^ Boon 2003

32. ^ Simon Reynolds, *Generation Ecstasy: Into the World of Techno and Rave Culture*, Routledge, 1999 (from a 1998 hardcover), ISBN 978-0-415-92373-6, p. 50: "the truly "progressive" bands of the late sixties and early seventies had more in common with twentieth-century avant-classical composers (electro-acoustic, musique concrète, the New York school of drone-minimalism)"

33. ^ Cook & Pople 2004, p. 547: "On the other hand, the legacy of La Monte Young was flourishing in late 1970s punk rock."

34. ^ Cox & Warner 2004, p. 320 (in "Digital Discipline: Minimalism in House and Techno" by Philip Sherburne): "In the late 1970s, rock music produced its own minimalist reaction to inflated, overproduced mainstream rock. The results, No Wave and punk rock, often made explicit links to the 60s' drone-minimalism tradition, as with Glenn Branca's bands Theoretical Girls and The Static, his guitar orchestras, and the many groups that he influenced."

35. ^ Hugh Wiley Hitchcock, *Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction*, Prentice-Hall, 1974, ISBN 0-13-608380-3, p. 269: "A few others besides Young have pursued similar paths of minimal drone-music, notably Terry Riley (b. 1935) in works like *In C* for orchestra [...]"

36. ^ Cook & Pople 2004, p. 659 ("Personalia" mini biographies): "Riley, Terry (b. 1935) [...] A meeting with La Monte Young deeply affected his outlook [...]"

37. ^ Cook & Pople 2004, p. 502: "Semi-audible music had been consistently prefigured in the music of left-field composers from Erik Satie onwards. 'Ambient music' emerged as a category when in the 1980s, influenced by the minimalism of La Monte Young, Terry Riley, Philip Glass, and Steve Reich, Brian Eno started to make music for deliberately sub-audible presentation, [...]"

38. **^** Brian Eno, 1978, sourced at [Ambient Music](#).

39. **^** Potter 2002, p. [91](#): Brian Eno saying "La Monte Young is the daddy of us all" (with endnote 113 p. [349](#) referencing "Quoted in Palmer, *A Father Figure for the Avant-Garde*, p. 49").

40. **^** [Spacemen 3](#), *[Dreamweapon: An Evening of Contemporary Sitar Music](#)*, [Sympathy for the Record Industry](#) SFTRI 211, 1993 CD re-issue, liner notes

41. **^** 15-January-2012 interview on Outsight Radio Hours [[15]](#)

42. **^** Gilbert Perlein & Bruno Corà (eds) & al., *Yves Klein: Long Live the Immaterial!* ("An anthological retrospective", catalog of an exhibition held in 2000), New York: Delano Greenidge, 2000, [ISBN 978-0-929445-08-3](#), p. [226](#): "This symphony, 40 minutes in length (in fact 20 minutes followed by 20 minutes of silence) is constituted of a single 'sound' stretched out, deprived of its attack and end which creates a sensation of vertigo, whirling the sensibility outside time."

43. **^** See also more sources and two recordings of the *Monotone Symphony* at the [Yves Klein](#) article.

44. **^** "Glass's discovery, during a 1969 runthrough of *Music In Similar Motion*, that sustained overtones and undertones were following the patterns played by the ensemble like an aural shadow. [...] And so, in his next piece, *Music With Changing Parts*, Glass decided to augment what was already occurring naturally. Toward the end of this new composition, he added in long tones, allotted to wind instruments and voices, held for the length of a breath, to support the notes that emerged from the keyboard patterns, with the rule that a player could reinforce any tone emerging from the whirl." ([CD liner notes](#) by [Tim Page](#), Elektra Nonesuch, 1994, booklet p. 5).

45. **^** Mueller, Klaus D. (2010 archive). ["Klaus Schulze: Irrlicht"](#) ([WebCite](#)). *Official Klaus Schulze Discography*. [www.klaus-schulze.com](#). Archived from [the original](#) on 27 July 2010. "Early organ drone experiments."

46. **^** Mueller, Klaus D. (2010 archive). ["Klaus Schulze: Cyborg"](#) ([WebCite](#)). *Official Klaus Schulze Discography*. [www.klaus-schulze.com](#). Archived from [the original](#) on 27 July 2010. "Further organ drone experiments. Heavy stuff."

47. **^** "It's quite possibly some of Obmana's best work and it's representative of the drone ambient side of his work." ([Matt Borghi review](#) from *[AllMusic](#)*).

48. **^** "Vidna Obmana's penchant for getting interstellar mileage out of even the most minimal electronic drones. [...] Roach's acoustic and synthetic rhythms are in deliberate absence here, but as dark, electronic buds blossom and begin to seed

the lifeless surroundings, the drones that erupt out of them vibrate with a tangible, malevolent pulse." ([Darren Bergstein review](#) from *[i/e](#)*). "This occurs through the composers' use of nebulous drones, and gorgeous passages of pure sonics drift" ([Thom Jurek review](#) from *[Detroit Metro Times](#)*).

1. **^** " 'Twenty-Three,' for massed violins, violas, and celli [...] is a gorgeous lattice of densely layered drones occupying a very small note range but varying widely in intensity of attack. Tony Conrad's violin music inevitably comes to mind, [...]" ([review](#) at [AllMusic](#)).
2. **^** [by Pitchfork](#)
3. **^** Anti-Gravity Bunny, ["Kyle Bobby Dunn: A Young Person's Guide to"](#)
4. **^** Sedimental Records (Sedimental has been following Dunn's sensitive and world-wise drone works closely for many years) ["Fragments & Compositions of Kyle Bobby Dunn"](#)
5. **^** Sedimental Records, ["Stars of the Lid: Music for Nitrous Oxide"](#) (original press release that went out with promo copies), [www.sedimental.com](#)
6. **^** [Sheilachandra.com: ABoneCroneDrone](#)