IDEAS OF BREVITY

BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126; CHOPIN, OPUS 28; WEBERN, OPUS 9

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music
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ABSTRACT

IDEAS OF BREVITY
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by
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This study examines musical brevity by linking it to artistic density, creative independence, and aesthetic individuality. Through score-analysis of three notably brief works, consideration of their historic contexts, and application of supportive musical, philosophic, and creative thought, the text apprehends musical brevity as no express indicator of artistic weakness but as a deliberate compositional strategy that can contribute greatly to the primary and essential meaning of a work.

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PREFACE

Cantabile e compiacevole, nostalgic and wistful; a thick, multivoiced *agitato*, impassioned and virtuosic; an almost imperceptible disruption of silence, precariously poised between concord and conflict: So begin Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sechs Bagatellen*, Op. 126 (1823–24); Frédéric Chopin, *Préludes*, Op. 28 (1836–39); and Anton Webern, *Sechs Bagatellen für Streichquartett*, Op. 9 (1911/13).

The Beethoven bagatelles comprise six distinct, though not wholly self-contained, units; the Chopin opus reaches its terminal bar line only after revealing twenty-four discrete compositions, one in every major and minor key; and the Webern bagatelles present a kaleidoscope of dormant timbral possibilities within the string quartet ensemble. Each opus is unique, and each maintains its uniqueness when regarded from several angles. Whether considering one of the works vis-à-vis its composer's oeuvre or setting it alongside any other generically similar effort, the individuality of the composition at hand remains radiant. Similarly, analysis using either critical or theoretic methodologies yields assessment of the three opuses as particular, even peculiar, singularities. Such perception is understandable—these works indeed are surprising and unpredictable, exotic and unorthodox. They are outliers at a remove from the primary corpus of Western music that nonetheless are important compositional ventures, and they should not be dismissed simply because each initially may seem a bizarre footnote. The central and meaningful eccentricities of the opuses iterate all the more urgently one challenge all three pose—that they be appraised not as oddi-

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ties tangential to the conventionally accepted accomplishments of Western music but rather as profound and important work deserving unqualified inclusion in the canon.

Despite their essential differences, brevity profoundly characterizes all three compositions. This is a primary reason why observers long have been hesitant to give these works full canonic status, as brief music often is suspected to be inherently less meaningful and less important than non-brief music. When Siegmund Levarie and Ernst Levy wonder, "When is a piece of music too short or too long?" (176), their question betrays their suspicion by implicitly assuming that a work can be too short or long. Surmounting such skepticism when regarding a composition of unusual temporal length must be a first step toward unmitigated appreciation of the brief work.

Yet, an inherent subjectivity nevertheless underpins the idea of brevity. This subjectivity vexes Levarie and Levy, who focus their inquiry by asking, "Is there a morphological defect of magnitude in a quartet movement of twenty seconds by Anton Webern and, at the other extreme, in the four evenings of Richard Wagner's *Ring* cycle, each considered as one complete event?" (176). While Levarie and Levy concern themselves primarily with perception, their hypothetical question pinpoints a chief conceptual component of brevity—that the idea itself is based on comparative assessment. The Webern bagatelles are brief when considered beside Wagner's *Ring*, but when compared with some of Webern's other work (viz. *Fünf Stücke für Orchester*, Op. 10, and *Drei kleine Stücke für Violoncell und Klavier*, Op. 11), the length of *Sechs Bagatellen* is not abnormal. Placing Chopin's *Préludes* alongside its contemporary *Charakterstücke* by Robert Schumann (e.g. *Kinderszenen, Waldszenen,* or *Carnaval*) similarly mitigates its brevity, and if one agrees with Alfred Brendel that Beethoven, Op. 126, "looks ahead to the Romantic styles of Schumann, from *Papillons* to *Kreisleriana*" (21),

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and considers the Beethoven bagatelles akin to the above Schumann scores, the distinctiveness of Beethoven's use of brevity somewhat dissipates. Why, then, does it seem objectively apparent that these compositions by Beethoven, Chopin, and Webern, even if considered abstractly, are curiously brief when comparison between the length of the work at hand and some apriori understanding of temporal normalcy is bound to the idea of brevity?

Implied temporal comparison between a brief work and one of standard duration underlies the evaluation of the one as brief. The musical time frame used by most compositions of the respective era, the lengths of the composer's other music, and the duration customary to the particular genre help establish temporal normalcy; any deviation from this normalcy yields the perception that the work at hand has an unusual duration. Tacit comparison between the time spans of the chosen compositions and generally acknowledged temporal normalcy, as determined above, helps establish the three opuses as brief.

Analysts have often considered these brief compositions as implicitly less meritorious than their composers' lengthier work. When Jeffrey Kallberg writes, "[T]he notion that smaller types rank lower hierarchically than larger kinds has remained ingrained since Chopin's time" (131), he may as well include within his assessment the general rejection of Beethoven's brief compositions from careful analytic or critical scrutiny; their evaluation has been clouded by a bias toward Beethoven's lengthier opuses. For example, when Martin Cooper infers that Beethoven considered Op. 126 a collection of "nothing more than occasional pieces…[that] were in fact potboilers" (214), he voices a common, yet erroneous, view of the opus that attempts to justify its dismissal from deliberative study. Far more sympathetic is Edward Cone's thought that the genre of bagatelle "gave Beethoven a chance to try new methods in a setting at once relaxing (not too much was at stake) yet realistic (they were nevertheless complete composi-

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tions)" (1977, 85); nonetheless, such words impart to Cone's theoretic study of Opp. 119 and 126 a possibly unintentional supposition about brevity. Why would Beethoven have not so much at stake while composing particularly brief music? Why would he relax more when working on a brief composition than when creating music of greater breadth? It does seem Beethoven himself took Op. 126 seriously: He assigned Six Bagatelles an opus number, unlike those many works he considered relatively unimportant, and, as Cone partly has shown, he gave the bagatelles theoretic richness missing from much of his without-opus compositions. In addition, one might believe that if Beethoven intended his bagatelles to be regarded as earnestly as the other works within his opus catalog—if he had wanted Op. 126 to stand convincingly between Opp. 125 (Symphony 9) and 127 (the first late quartet)—he would have had more, not less, difficulty gaining positive reception for this music of notable brevity than for work of a more familiar span.[1]

Chopin's *Préludes* also have received a mixed reception. Many listeners have been confused by the conspicuously brief units of the opus, and a common understanding is that most of the preludes are too fugitive to stand alone—an idea supported when recalling that Chopin likely intended each prelude to be programmed before music with a lengthier expanse. However, such a utilitarian assessment disregards the unity of the complete opus, and frequent performances of the *Préludes* as an integral work challenge the validity of appreciating each unit as a self-contained entity. The architecture of the opus reinforces its consideration as a totality, with a circle-of-fifths key motion linking prelude to prelude that implies intrinsic linear connection from one unit to the next and stresses the oneness of the set.

Lastly, Webern's Op. 9 has fascinated and puzzled listeners, performers, scholars, and critics. Historically and conceptually positioned between the tonal

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and serial worlds, Six Bagatelles for String Quartet has spawned numerous, and often pitch-based, analyses that do not substantially broach the brevity of and within the work and leave unanswered many questions: What meaning does brevity lend the bagatelles? In Op. 9, why is brevity subordinate to no preestablished compositional criteria concerning pitch, rhythm, dynamic, and timbre? How does brevity connect to Webern's handling of these components? In Webern's bagatelles, as in Beethoven's bagatelles and Chopin's preludes, brevity is essential, not incidental; it affects every creative aspect of each composition. This study considers the nature of this influence and suggests strategies for approaching music that centrally utilizes brevity.

Chapter One introduces density as an essential quality of a brief composition. In his preface to the Webern bagatelles, Arnold Schoenberg writes, "Every glance might be expanded into a poem, every sigh drawn out into a novel *[Roman]*. But: A novel [can be] expressed with a single gesture, a joy with a single breath."[2] While it is unclear whether Schoenberg considers each bagatelle of Op. 9 a single gesture/breath or whether he believes that every brief idea composing one of Webern's bagatelles may convey a complete *Roman*, either understanding is true to the spirit of his remarks. Both an integral unit of Op. 9 and each of its fleeting aural glimpses may carry as much meaning as a novel and its constituent gestures; likewise, each Webern bagatelle, and every brief moment within that bagatelle, contains myriad significance. All components of the opus have manifold meanings, and brevity prominently influences those meanings. Webern enhances the musical density of his opus by telescoping profound depth into the compact temporal spaces of both the complete bagatelles and their composite gestures; Part One explores such an idea of density in Webern's opus as well as in the selected works of Beethoven and Chopin.

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Also addressed is the way brevity encourages a composer to reconsider his or her inherited musical notions. Such reexamination amplifies the creative liberty of the composer and often helps yield music of high aesthetic individuality, for when deciding to craft a score with brevity at its heart, any composer must rethink, if not jettison, many received ways and means of composition. Centralizing brevity in the chosen works helped each composer achieve fresh musical thought and action, and Part Two suggests ways musical brevity especially encouraged the liberation of Chopin's, Beethoven's, and Webern's creativity and thus helped cast the resulting music further into uncharted waters.

NOTES

1. Beethoven's creative use of brevity does not stand wholly apart from the mainstream of his work. For example, while all of his late quartets are lengthy compositions, they often have brief segments. Nevertheless, the sort of overall brevity present in Six Bagatelles differs from the temporal norm established by most of his music.

2. My translation. Schoenberg's original: "Jeder Blick läßt sich zu einem Gedicht, jeder Seufzer zu einem Roman ausdehnen. Aber: einen Roman durch eine einzige Geste, ein Glück durch ein einziges Aufatmen auszudrücken..." (Webern 1924, 2).

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PART ONE
DENSITY

CHAPTER ONE

Here lyeth muche rychnesse in lytell space.

—John Heywood, *The Foure PP*

PARAMETRIC INDIVIDUALITY, AGGREGATE COMPLETION
WEBERN, OPUS 9/1

The first of Webern's *Sechs Bagatellen für Streichquartett*, Op. 9, has ten measures. Eight are in $\frac{3}{4}$, and two are in $\frac{2}{4}$. The primary tempo of the bagatelle is ♩ = ca. 60, with mm. 7–8 containing an *accelerando* to ♩ = ca. 96 and m. 10 having a *ritard* to ♩ = ca. 44. When performed according to these tempo markings, the composition lasts less than forty-five seconds; see Example 1.1.[1]

The bagatelle is brief by most standards. However, its brevity indicates neither triviality nor insignificance, for brevity is essential to the depth of meaning that one infers during careful listening and performance of the work. The fleeting quality of the composition and each of its constituent moments helps bring the slightest musical distinctions to the surface just as it initially shrouds those subtleties in hazy transience. After a first hearing, an open-minded listener likely will be left wondering what exactly he or she just heard, puzzled by the celerity of the work and sensing that he or she may have missed something that delicately flitted by during the performance. Nevertheless, upon close study, meaningful qualities may be discovered within each instant of the music, regardless how momentary those instants may be. Webern composed Op. 9/1

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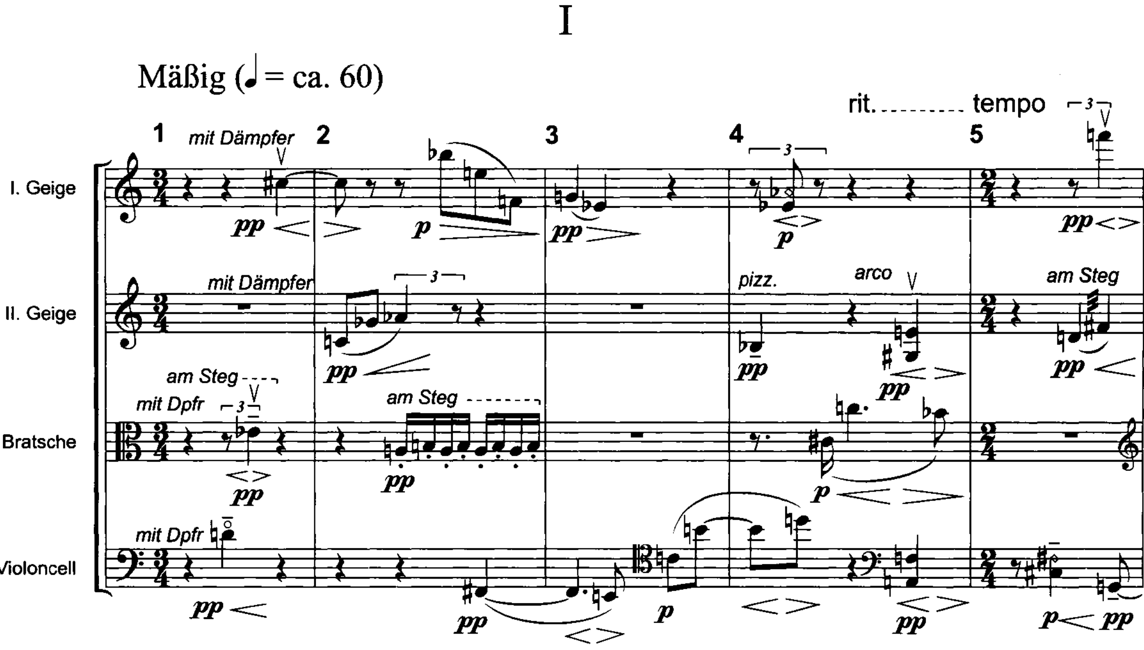

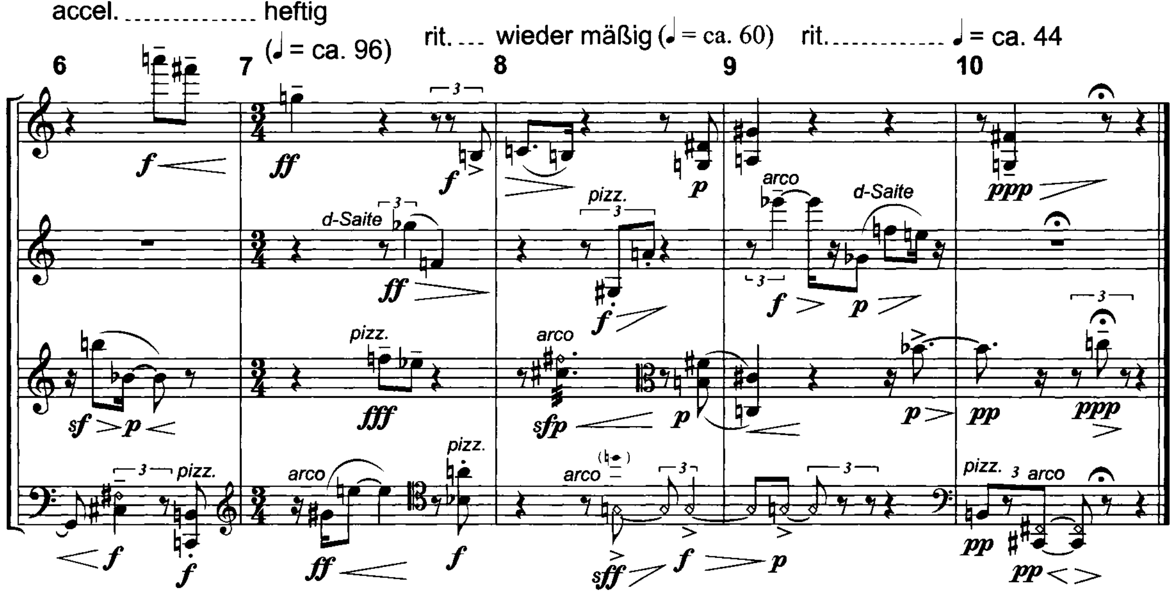

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EXAMPLE 1.1: WEBERN, OPUS 9/1

with deliberate care, paying much heed to each of its thirty seconds and giving vital importance to every overturning of silence.

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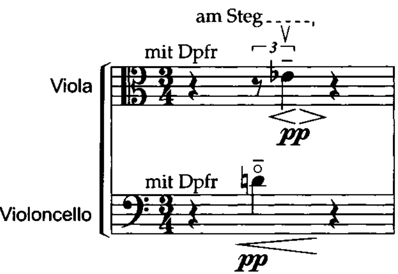
Webern's attention to detail emerges at the start of the composition. The violoncello is the inaugural instrument, beginning at *pianissimo* on the second quarter note of m. 1 and crescendoing until a rest on the third quarter note of the bar. A third-of-a-quarter-note later, the viola also enters at *pianissimo* and sounds a crescendo. Unlike the violoncello, though, the viola diminuendos halfway through its tone; see Example 1.2.



EXAMPLE 1.2: WEBERN, OPUS 9/1, MEASURE 1, VIOLA AND VIOLONCELLO

The dynamic distinction of these one-pitch gestures is subtly suggestive. Having the viola and violoncello function seemingly harmonically but use different dynamic contours initially seems gratuitous; one may even suspect that the publisher or engraver made a transcription error. This likely would have been the case had Webern conceived the two voices as equal halves of a composite harmonic unit and intended them to merge as one, for such a conception could have yielded similar dynamics in both parts (as in Example 1.3). Accepting the published dynamics as faithful to Webern's imagination encourages a different linear apprehension: rather than hearing two lines meshing as one unit, the listener perceives the viola and violoncello as distinct voices with unique identities. Dynamic difference is one way Webern maintains instrumental individuality in the bagatelle.

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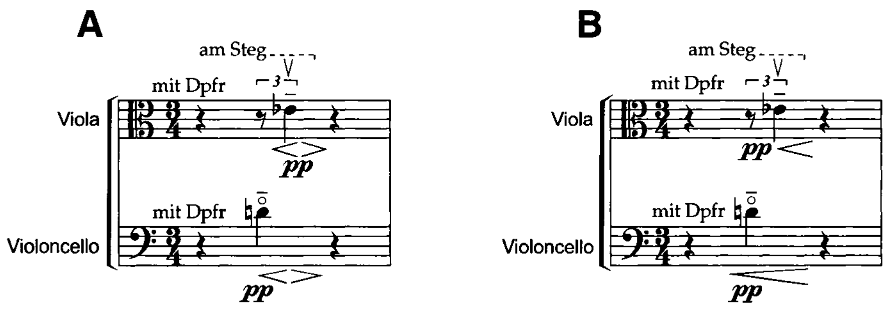

EXAMPLE 1.3: TWO HYPOTHETICAL DYNAMIC CONTOURS MERGING THE VIOLA AND VIOLONCELLO, WEBERN, OPUS 9/1, MEASURE 1

The immediately following music testifies to the accuracy of the published dynamics by reinforcing their individuality. On the third quarter note of m. 1, the violin 1 enters at *pianissimo* and crescendos and diminuendos like the preceding viola; by contrast, the violin 2 enters on the first quarter-note of m. 2 at *pianissimo* and crescendos without a subsequent diminuendo—like the earlier violoncello. Isolating these dynamics, the violin 1/viola and violin 2/violoncello pairs seem analogues of each other, and their linear unfolding may be understood formally as A–B–B–A (< , < >, < >, <).

Considering the pitches of the segment yields a similar, yet different, formal design. Sequentially, the first sounded notes of each instrument are D_4, $E\flat_4$, $C\sharp_5$, and C_4; these vertically align as in Example 1.4.

EXAMPLE 1.4: THE FIRST FOUR PITCHES, WEBERN, OPUS 9/1

Horizontally, two related pitch-class dyads emerge. The first, <D, E♭>, presents a half-step ascent from the first pitch-class to the second. The second, <C♯, C>,

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is a transposed mirror image of the first, with its initial pitch-class a half-step higher than its second. However, this mirror is in disguise, as Webern shrouds its aural recognition by transposing the C♯ up an octave.

Linear consideration of the dynamics accompanying these initial tones also produces sequential dyads related to each other—[𝆒 , < >] and [< >, 𝆒]. Yet, unlike the two pitch-class dyads, these dynamic dyads are not mirror images of one another. Although the second dynamic pair swaps the two elements of the first dynamic pair, Webern reverses the direction of the pitches in the second dyad as he shifts the unordered set down two semitones. Resequencing dynamic dyads can yield no true analogue for two transposed pairs of pitches, but nonetheless, a linear reversal of two swapped pitch-classes might better align with changing a crescendo into a diminuendo, or vice versa. Such a view aligns <D, E♭>/<C♯, C> with either [𝆒 , < >]/[< >, 𝆓] or [𝆒 , < >]/[> <, 𝆓].

Webern apprehends the concepts of pitch and dynamic level as self-contained parameters. In the first four articulations of the bagatelle, pitch and intensity do relate, but Webern individualizes the pitch and dynamic dyads to the degree that each may be understood on its own and divorced from its cross-parameter counterpart. At root, the instant comprising these dynamics and pitches is doubly faceted.

Regarding the intervals as unordered sets yields a different dyadic configuration. While the intervallic distance within the first dyad, {D, E♭}, is a semitone in both pitch-class space and pitch space, when considering the exact octave positioning of the two notes of the second dyad, {C_4, C♯$_5$}, the space between the dyads expands from a pitch-class-space half step to become a pitch-space augmented octave. Additionally, the span between the first and second dyad has a wider distance in pitch space than in pitch-class space, with the two-semitone,

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diminished-third pitch-class-space span {C♯, E♭} becoming a pitch-space span of an augmented sixth ({E♭$_4$, C♯$_5$}). Understood as such, the composite result no longer suggests two dyad pairs but a trichordal grouping, {C_4, D_4, E♭$_4$}, set against a lone outsider, {C♯$_5$}.

Yet, one of these pitches is a violoncello harmonic, and its fundamental tone is not the sounding D_4, but D_3. If one considers this open-string fundamental the essential note played by the instrument and the first overtone, the harmonically sounded D_4, a modification of this essence, the dyadic mirror-image pairing holds in pitch space: The {D_4, E♭$_4$} half step becomes a {D_3/E♭$_4$} minor ninth corresponding to the span between the violins; see Example 1.5.

EXAMPLE 1.5: DYAD PAIRS WITH THE VIOLONCELLO HARMONIC FUNDAMENTAL, WEBERN, OPUS 9/1, MEASURES 1–2

The violoncello harmonic is one of many timbral modifications within the bagatelle. Scanning the entire composition reveals regular sound-coloration such as arco and pizzicato activation, ponticello and normal bowing, and natural and stopped harmonics. Webern's creative awareness of tone color at each instant gives the work additional dimension by further distinguishing every sound within this "mélodie de timbres" (Jameux, 218) as unique.

For example, the viola bows its initial pitch *am Steg*. Such activation gives the note great timbral definition just as the harmonic helps individualize the concurrent sound in the violoncello line. Like the dynamics, these timbral

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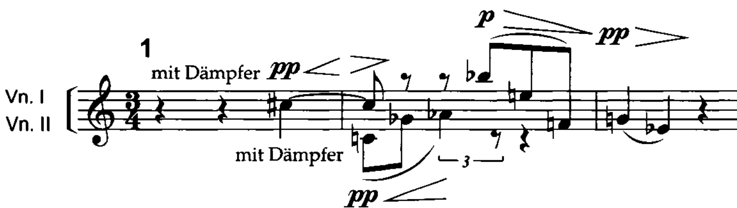
distinctions enhance the sound-color difference between the viola and violoncello and contribute to the acoustic distinction of the two instruments. While, when considering pitch alone, one might argue that m. 1 contains two pairs of instruments, evaluation of timbre and dynamic suggests the self-containment of the voices constituting the first dyad.[2] In this regard, the first articulations of the violins stand timbrally apart from both the viola and violoncello, as each violin produces its initial sound with normal bowing. Unlike the viola and violoncello, which Webern separates by timbral difference, timbral likeness between the violins encourages their consideration as a single harmonic unit.

The rhythm of m. 2 reinforces this violin 1/violin 2 pairing. The two instruments linearly fuse, with the ending of the violin 1 (m. 2) merging with the beginning of the violin 2 and the ending of the violin 2 (m. 2, middle) linking with the reentry of the violin 1. Example 1.6 shows this single line thus dovetailing across the two instruments, offers a conceptual reason for the concurrent absence of any timbral difference between the violins, and presents the material of the opening measure in a still-different light.



EXAMPLE 1.6: COMPOSITE LINE, VIOLIN 1 AND VIOLIN 2, WEBERN, OPUS 9/1, MEASURES 1–3

The preceding paragraphs suggest various orientations toward the four initial articulations. They posit three ways to regard the dynamic material: as four discrete entities; as two similar contours spread across an A–B–B–A formal

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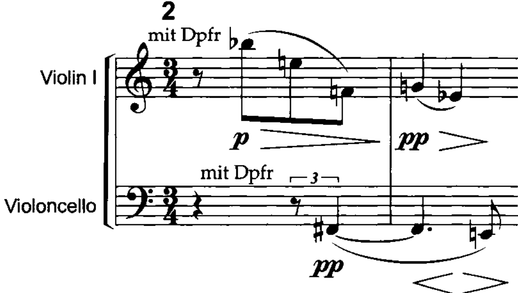
surface; and as two pairs of related dyads, [<< , < >] and [< >, <<]. Pitchwise, the above analysis considers the initial notes as ordered dyadic pairs related by transposition and inversion, <D, E♭>/<C♯, C>; as a three-note cluster pitted against a single outlying pitch, {C$_4$, D$_4$, E♭$_4$,}/{C♯$_5$}; and as two unordered pairs related in pitch space, {D$_3$, E♭$_4$,}/{C$_4$, C♯$_5$}. In the timbral and rhythmic analyses of m. 2, the violin 1 and violin 2 merge as a single shared line. The viola and violoncello of mm. 2–3 relate in terms of pitch, with the A–B viola whole-step oscillation linking to the F♯–E whole-step violoncello line. Yet, a timbral and rhythmic consideration of the viola and violoncello in mm. 2–3 implies linear independence for the voices, as the viola adds staccato articulation to its ponticello bowing and the violoncello sounds two pitches, F♯$_2$ and E$_2$, with straightforward arco bowing.

In mm. 2–3, the unaffected violoncello timbre connects the instrument with the continuing violin 1 passage, although the two instruments do not come together in a single line as the midmeasure violin 1 and violin 2. Instead, the violoncello and violin 1 play separate melodies that function contrapuntally (m. 2, second half–m. 3, first half). Webern rhythmically enhances this two-voice counterpoint by having the violin 1 and violoncello never simultaneously attack their pitches; see Example 1.7.



EXAMPLE 1.7: COUNTERPOINT, VIOLIN 1 AND VIOLONCELLO, WEBERN, OPUS 9/1, MEASURES 2–3

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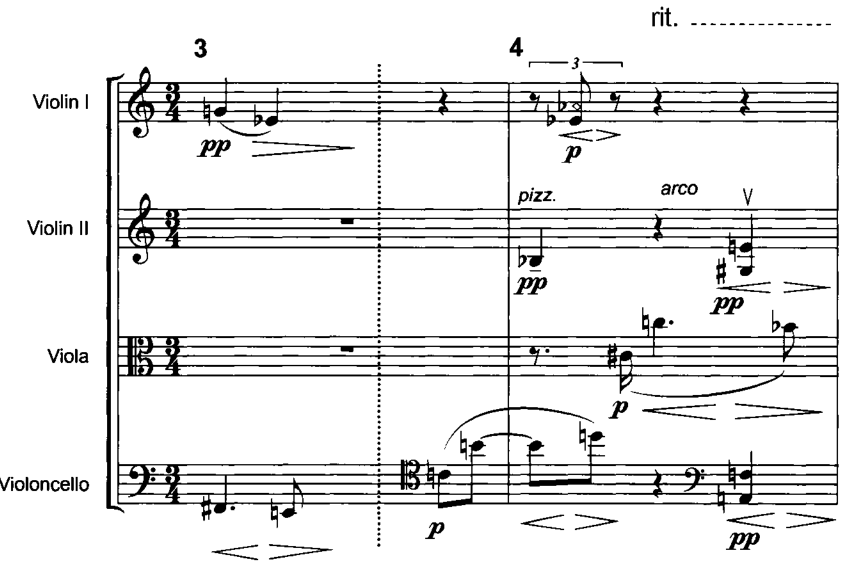
Understanding timbre as a way Webern groups the instruments in the first three measures makes easier understanding his dynamics. Juxtaposing the violin 1 diminuendo and the violin 2 crescendo (mm. 1–2) enhances the instrumental dovetailing, and similarly, the violoncello < > (m. 3) begins with the closing diminuendo of the violin 1 and ends midway through the bar. Dynamic and timbre effect a metamorphosis in the violoncello and help establish E_2 as the final pitch within the bagatelle's first section, a boundary further enhanced by the shift of the violoncello to its tenor register and the *subito piano* dynamic of the first leapt-to pitch. In m. 4, the violin 2 plays pizzicato and the violin 1 sounds a stopped harmonic; this is the first instance of timbral difference between the two instruments. The viola is next to enter the bar, and it sounds its first material that is not bowed *am Steg*. Together, the timbres and dynamics of all four instruments help demarcate the beginning of a new section; see Example 1.8.



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EXAMPLE 1.8: FIRST SECTIONAL DIVISION, WEBERN, OPUS 9/1, MEASURES 3–4

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Pitch also indicates this sectional division. All pitch-classes have sounded for the first time in the bagatelle after the violin 1 plays G and completes the first aggregate (m. 3). Aggregate completion is a regularly applied strategy of formal division in the preserial music of the Second Viennese School, and Webern particularly uses attainment of the chromatic spectrum as a means of controlling the form of music emancipated from tonal law. As well, aggregate completion encourages brevity by its efficient consideration of each pitch-class as present even when sounded but once. When aggregate completion is the primary means of demarcating a composition's sections, repetition of any pitch-class, while optional (see the repeated violoncello Gs, mm. 8–9), is not necessary.

Webern recognizes such implications. In his 1932 lectures on "The Path to Composition in Twelve Tones," he comments, "[A]bout 1911 I wrote the 'Bagatelles for String Quartet' (Op. 9), all very brief pieces, lasting a couple of minutes—perhaps the most brief music thus far. Here I had the instinct that when the twelve tones have gone round *[abgelaufen]*, the piece is at an end" (1963, 51).[3] With these words, Webern looks backward from the vantage point of dodecaphonicism and tries to explain its development. Understandably, he exaggerates, for the individual bagatelle does not necessarily end upon completion of a given aggregate; instead, aggregate completion can establish possible points for formal division.

While the full going-round of the twelve pitch-classes signifies the completion of one cycle and the attainment of a point where a new rotation may be started, unlike the aggregate-rotations primary to twelve-tone technique, in *Sechs Bagatellen* Webern maintains no specific linear sequence of the pitch-classes through the transformations of transposition, inversion, retrograde, and retrograde inversion. Although such an approach does characterize much of Webern's serial music, when composing *Sechs Bagatellen* he apprehended the

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aggregate nonlinearly. In Op. 9, the chromatic spectrum comprises pitches arranged in a nonsequential and atemporal *bloc*—"a group wherein all discrete parts depend on one another *[ensemble dont toutes les parties dépendent les unes des autres]*"—and no invariant ordering controls the linear exposure of the aggregate's component tones.[4] Such an orientation necessarily allows Webern to give each aggregate-cycle a unique identity. No composite presentation of the twelve pitch-classes needs resemble any other, and the fluidity of the full chromatic encourages each *bloc* within the work to be a singular unfolding of the aggregate.

Nonrepetition focuses each aggregate-presentation and increases the importance and the individuality of any one *bloc*; each arrangement of the spectrum receives greater salience from its linear singularity. Such heightened uniqueness also applies to the component moments of any one aggregate, for when having such an orientation toward creation, Webern allows the emphasis on individuality to envelop not only the most prominent aspects of the work but the more subtle ones as well. Regardless of how brief, each instant within every aggregate-presentation has the potential to offer the work an unrivaled contribution.

Brevity of both the aggregate and of its smaller unique divisions can be a natural characteristic of music composed from such a perspective. Likewise, the high degree of detail Webern gives each instant of the composition springs from a creative will to make every brief flickering unique. Such is increased musical density, the consolidation of a depth of meaning within a diametrically brief span of time. Appreciation of density is crucial when assessing particularly brief, yet especially meaningful, compositions such as Webern's *Bagatellen*. Bearing this idea of density in mind similarly benefits consideration of Chopin's *Préludes*.

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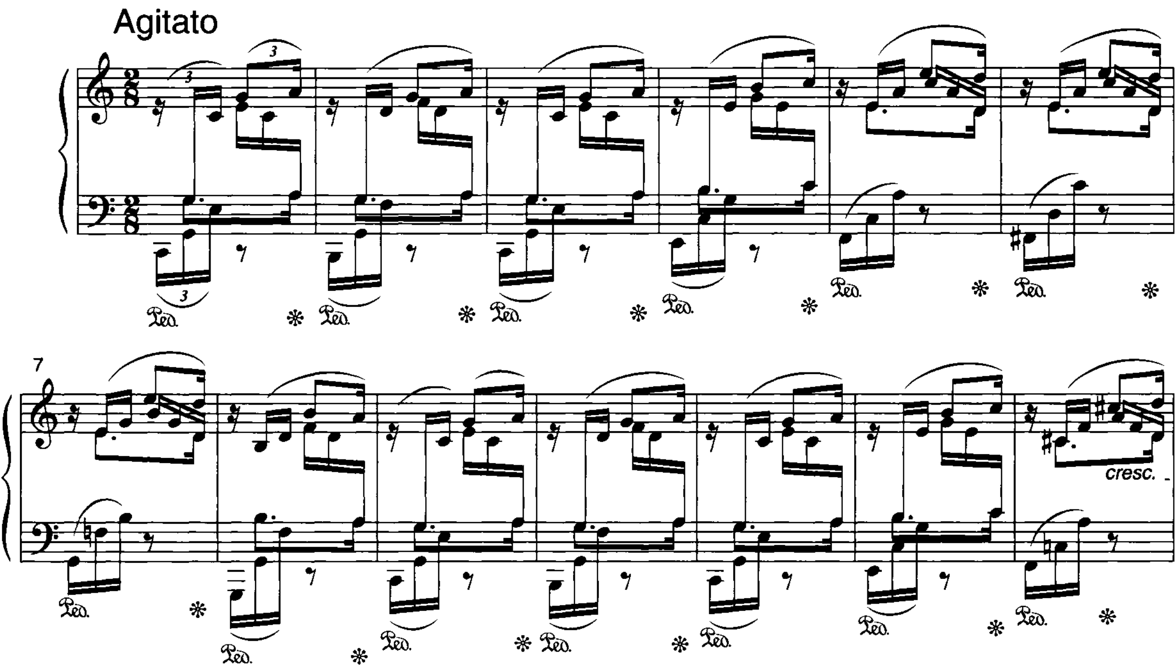
AMBIGUITY AND TEMPORAL MANIPULATION
CHOPIN, OPUS 28/1

Density is central to Chopin's *Préludes*. Like Webern's *Bagatellen*, the set of preludes contains great depth and embodies a high level of detail throughout the brief moments of its semi-self-contained units. Brevity permeates the opus as a characteristic, meaningful, and intriguing musical element.

However, the Chopin work markedly differs from the Webern composition. *Préludes* is triadic and tonal, whereas *Sechs Bagatellen* is not; Chopin's composition is for piano, while Webern's is for string quartet; the architecture governing the overall layout of each opus is unique; and each Chopin prelude tends toward homogenization and monothematicism rather than comprising strikingly different moments like the Webern bagatelles. Example 1.9 presents the first prelude of Chopin's opus.



EXAMPLE 1.9: CHOPIN, OPUS 28/1

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EXAMPLE 1.9. *continued.*

With exploration of a single measure-long motive as its foundational element, Prelude 1 is brief. Initially, both motive and composition seem simple, as the two embody easily apparent forms and move with elementary harmonic progression. However, the surface simplicity of the music disguises the density of both the motive and of the total composition: close study of the prelude reveals that its initially perceived simplicity is misleading.

As seen in Example 1.10, the basic motive of the prelude is a contoured arpeggiation containing at least three "discrete though interactive particles" (Samson 1985, 74) within its basic shape: the composite arpeggiation (A), the

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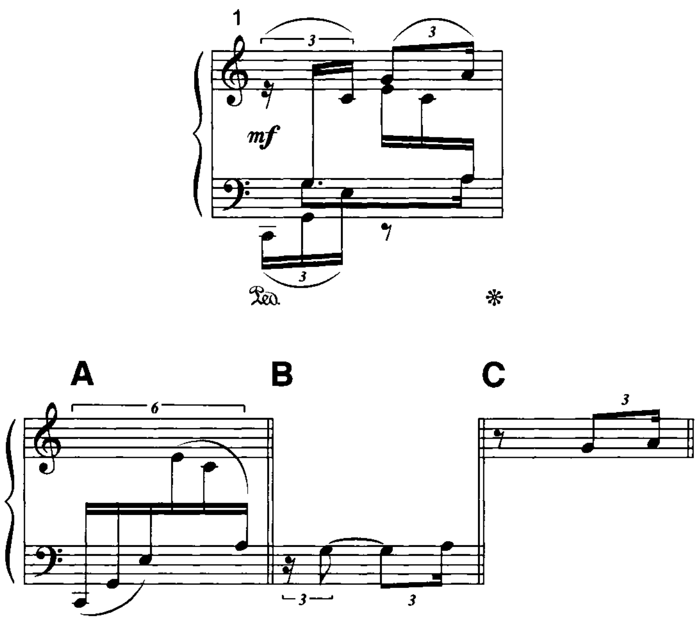

EXAMPLE 1.10: THE BASIC MOTIVE AND ITS THREE SEMI-INDEPENDENT LINES, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/1, MEASURE 1

stepwise gesture in the tenor position (B), and the ascending soprano line (C). In m. 18 and following, Chopin splits this arpeggiated figure into its ascending and descending halves, with the ascending bass portion maintaining its triplet rhythm and the descending alto portion joining the tenor and soprano in a new quintuplet figure (D); see Example 1.11.

These discrete lines intertwine throughout the prelude, and the continuous presence of partially independent voices gives the work a complexity belied by its surface. One manifestation of this complexity is harmonic and rhythmic density blocking any objective analysis that attempts to yield an absolute understanding of the composition. Like the Webern bagatelle, a multiplicity of possible comprehensions attests to the density of the prelude, and the brevity of each discrete instant makes ever-more challenging the realization of a concrete and invariant view of the work. In the prelude, ambiguity is omnipresent.

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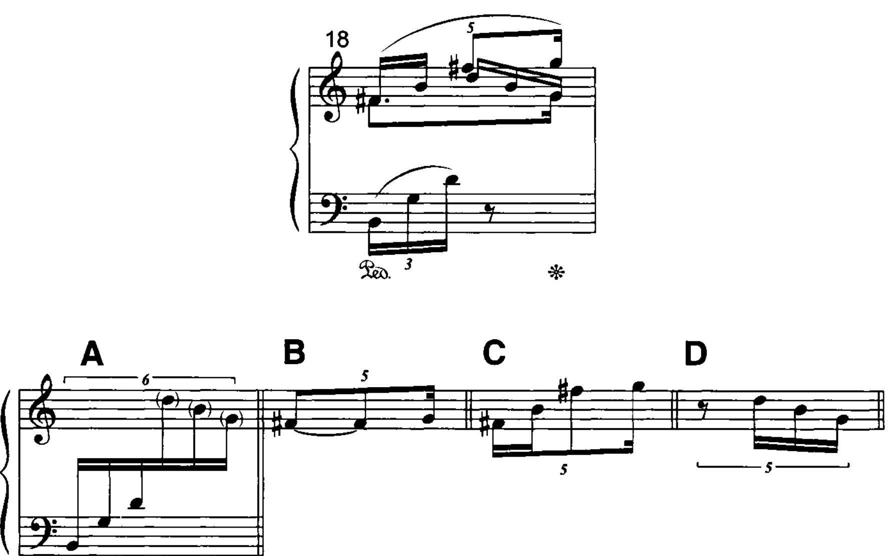

EXAMPLE 1.11: THE BASIC MOTIVE TRANSFORMED, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/1, MEASURE 18

Ambiguity, both harmonic and formal, first overtly appears in m. 13. The opening sixteen bars fall into two eight-measure groupings (mm. 1–8 and 9–16) that imply an antecedent/consequent relationship. The close of the first phrase on a dominant sonority (mm. 7–8) and the exact repetition in mm. 9–12 of the first four bars of the work support the notion of a straightforward A–B–A–C formal understanding of mm. 1–16. However, mm. 13–16, the concluding bars of the would-be consequent phrase, thwart such an expected comprehension of this opening music. Although the music prior to m. 13 moves through a straightforward series of tonic, subdominant, and dominant harmonies, unusual sonorities at m. 14 suggest more than the surface-level simplicity to which the opening alludes. How to analyze the odd harmonies of m. 13? The left hand implies an F-major triad, which is a logical chord choice following the first-inversion C-major triad of m. 12, but the right hand challenges this as the only harmonic implication of the bar. The C♯ beginning the ascending soprano line hints at D minor, rather like the soprano E in m. 5 puts great weight on D, and

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the movement of both the C$\sharp_5$ (m. 13) and E_5 (m. 5) to D_5 at the end of their respective measures supports this suggestion; such analysis thus discerns an F–d triadic motion spanning the bar.

What, then, of the simultaneous left-hand C_3 and right-hand C$\sharp_4$? While the left hand implies, in F Major, I–V^4_3–I_6–V^6_4 (mm. 13–16), the right hand challenges this implication by presenting within this passage top-stave pitches that jostle against those of the lower stave and blur overall harmonic identity—for example, the C_3/C$\sharp_4$ juxtaposition. Partial independence of the four voices helps produce harmonic ambiguity, and this ambiguity encourages multiple analyses of the motivic transformations and consequently increases the density of the prelude.

Linear independence, though, is not as prominent in the Chopin composition as it is in the Webern bagatelle. Chopin's prelude remains subject to the workings of tonal practice, and as such it cannot effect complete independence of its constituent elements. One way to see this is to isolate momentarily the soprano and tenor voices, which contain the pitches of the prelude that are the most challenging to understand.

In m. 1, the soprano and tenor effect dissonance, and their dissonance continues throughout the prelude. The soprano voice heterophonically doubles the tenor, and no deviation from this formulation occurs until the end of the composition. This heterophonic model first appears as in Example 1.12.

EXAMPLE 1.12: SOPRANO IMITATION OF TENOR, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/1, MEASURE 1

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The heterophony continues throughout the composition, with the tenor always beginning before the soprano and the soprano always sounding, after a delay, above the tenor. Both voices move stepwise together at the end of every bar, and the perceived result is that the soprano echoes the tenor (or the tenor anticipates the soprano). Dissonances thus appear in the first half of a given measure and resolve at its end—as in m. 13, where the tenor C♯ anticipates the bar-ending motion to D and does not fit the simultaneous F-major harmony of the bass. As such heterophony in the soprano and tenor voices sustains across entire measures, dissonances result from the superimposition of consequent and antecedent sonorities. The disruption of the temporal flow of a bar and the superimposition of two discrete instants within one measure result, and the density of the particular moment accordingly increases.

As he enhances density by rupturing the harmonic flow, Chopin also adds to the depth of the prelude by modifying the motivic rhythm. For example, in mm. 18–20 the initial sixteenth-rest in the soprano, alto, and tenor disappears, and the composite rhythm of the passage changes from two pairs of sixteenth-note triplets into a measure-long sixteenth-note quintuplet; see Example 1.13.

EXAMPLE 1.13: RHYTHMIC TRANSFORMATION, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/1, MEASURES 18–20

Against this new figure, the bass voice retains its original rhythm of a sixteenth-note triplet followed by an eighth rest. With the right and left hands thus out of sync, a cross-rhythm results that adds tension and agitation, heightens linear individuality, and increases the density of the segment; see Example 1.14.

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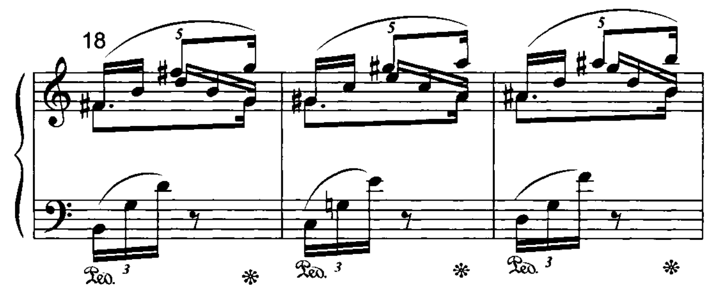

EXAMPLE 1.14: CROSS-RHYTHM, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/1, MEASURES 18–20

The rhythmic notation of mm. 18–20 (and mm. 25–26) is enigmatic. In the Henle Urtext, the vertical alignment of a composite rhythm within each measure does not correspond properly with the durations assigned to each voice. As presented, the quintuplet includes only the soprano and alto, and the tenor misaligns with the tuplet's final note. The tenor voice contains four, not five, sixteenth notes, and it does not have the proper duration to be included within the quintuplet, as Henle's vertical positioning of the final tuplet-articulation implies. Neither would the bass voice sound simultaneously with the quintuplet's first three attacks; instead, the sixteenth-note triplet, which is followed by an eighth rest, would sound independently of the quintuplet. Henle does represent this alignment, with the third note of the triplet appropriately placed between the second and third notes of the quintuplet. When following Chopin's rhythm mathematically and without inference in both halves of the measure, the composite result is more complex than the one Henle's vertical positioning suggests; correspondingly, performance of the measure becomes considerably more difficult. Without correcting Chopin's rhythmic values, the voices metrically align as in Example 1.15.

These climactic measures are not the only places in the prelude where Chopin creates rhythmic ambiguity by conflicting the mathematically measured and visually represented rhythms. Discrepancy between these two is present

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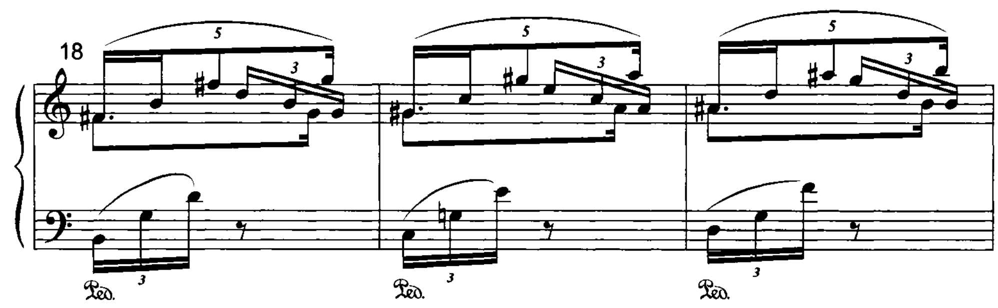

EXAMPLE 1.15: STRICTLY NOTATED RHYTHMIC ALIGNMENT OF ALL FOUR VOICES, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/1, MEASURES 18–20

throughout the first thirty-two bars of the composition, and when accepting the Henle Urtext as notationally accurate, such rhythmic confusion is missing only from the concluding two measures. Chopin never notates the basic motive free of an essential rhythmic ambiguity, as the metrically correct and vertically represented rhythms of the motive always misalign. This incongruity appears as early as the first measure, where the isolated tenor voice contains an uncertain durational sequence. Presuming that the first tenor articulation should align, as in the Urtext, with the second sixteenth note of a triplet, one may wonder why Chopin gave this pitch the odd value of a dotted-eighth note: it is unclear precisely how to place, with vertical accuracy, the sixteenth note that follows. Did Chopin err, or are we to trust his rhythmic notation? And if we have faith in the mathematics of his rhythm, what exactly does he intend by ⌐3¬ 𝄿 ♪. ?

Ordinarily, such a rhythmic notation indicates four sixteenth-notes in the space of three. Although this figure most likely would appear in compound meter, the 4:3 ratio makes sense in $\frac{2}{8}$ if the bar contains one sixteenth note after the tuplet, as m. 1 indeed does. This final sixteenth note, however, would fall in its usual metric position and not on the third sixteenth of a triplet, where Henle places it. Rather than as presented in the Urtext, if positioned with strict mathematical accuracy, the sixteenth note following the dotted-eighth note would land

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between the second and third articulations of the sixteenth-note triplet. In addition, the dotted-eighth note does not align with the second sixteenth of the first triplet but falls slightly after this pitch; see Example 1.16.

EXAMPLE 1.16: ONE PROPER ALIGNMENT OF THE ALTO AND TENOR VOICES WHEN ADHERING TO THE RHYTHMS INDICATED, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/1, MEASURE 1

If the performer plays the tenor rhythm in Example 1.16, a bounce sounds on the final sixteenth note. As in m. 18, the composite rhythm of m. 1 has magnified complexity when performed with strict adherence to its metric rhythmic values. The vertical alignment of the Henle Urtext likely is what Chopin intended for performance, but it is not necessarily the complete rhythmic essence of the motive. Editorial tinkering with the figure's vertical alignment does not work in strict mathematical fashion; as in Example 1.16, the tenor neither fits metrically within the measures nor aligns with the soprano or alto. As Chopin likely desired Henle's rhythmic alignment, why did he not use clearer notation, as suggested by Example 1.17?

In this first prelude of Op. 28, harmonic juxtaposition and ambiguous rhythmic notation befog the prelude's unraveling of time. As Chopin manipulates the linear ordering of the composition, he heightens its density. Harmonic events occur out of proper sequence and overlap; rhythmic events have metri-

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EXAMPLE 1.17: CLEARER RHYTHMIC NOTATION OF TENOR VOICE FROM EXAMPLE 1.16, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/1, MEASURE 1

cally inaccurate scoring and are performed accordingly. The extreme detail of the music bears ambiguity within its precision, and ambiguity is partly responsible for enhancing the density of the work.

All of this connects intently with Chopin's idea of brevity as regards the genre of prelude. Like many within the opus, the first composition scarcely comes into being before vanishing and leaving the listener with the sense of having espied an ephemeral aural snippet of something yet undisclosed and the likely anticipation of a subsequent lengthier work. In Chopin's day, the notion of prelude carried this second idea and implied that a composition within the genre precedes a more substantial musical event. In the work of J. S. Bach, a *Präludium* prepares a *Fuga*; in Chopin's time, pianists customarily began recitals with a few brief, exploratory preludes.[5] Yet, Chopin uses neither of these generic orientations in Op. 28 and instead follows his C-major prelude with a prelude in A minor. A pair of preludes in G major and E minor follows Prelude 2; another pair follows these; and so forth. No prelude of Op. 28 instigates a lengthier composition, but each instead provokes a subsequent prelude.

Chopin founds his idea of the genre on an ambiguity that causes musicians, scholars, and listeners to wonder what he intended by identifying his opus as he did. André Gide's familiar admission that he did not comprehend Chopin's title prepares his subsequent question that continues to be asked: "Préludes. Préludes à quoi?" Robert Schumann answers this question by sug-

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gesting that the *Préludes* be considered "sketches, the beginnings of studies, or, if you will, ruins" (Schumann, 137–38). Schumann bases his observation on the brevity of Chopin's preludes and implies that the compositions could be either scribblings preceding or afterthoughts following a hypothetical lengthier work.

That Chopin designed no such work to follow each prelude but instead crafted a self-contained opus of singular compositions does not compromise the way each unit within the whole suggests connection with lengthier material. This may have been what Schumann intended when writing that the preludes resemble sketches or ruins—that their essential brevity connotes sketch-like expressions of works that, in another time and place, might have encouraged more elaborate compositions. Schumann finds Chopin's work charged with an aesthetic of suggestiveness and embodying ambiguity at both its surface and its conceptual core.

Ambiguity of both the genre and the surface yield an increased density, for at its essence, ambiguity positions no single understanding as exclusive. Density, as defined in the present study and as manifest within Chopin, Op. 28, necessarily rises from such ambiguities; the impossibility of affixing to the *Préludes* an isolated evaluation is one of the most definable characteristics of the opus and links to the creative centrality of brevity.

ARABESKE AND TRUNCATION
BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/1

An ideal first-time listener to Beethoven's *Sechs Bagatellen* approaches the work with no foreknowledge of the composition. If this listener is familiar with Beethoven's music, and particularly those works composed in the years immediately surrounding the creation of Op. 126, he or she may anticipate a work

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with traits of the composer's late style. Yet, the title of Op. 126 threatens the security of such an expectation: *Sechs Bagatellen*. What might this title mean?

Beethoven designated two earlier works as bagatelles: *Sieben Bagatellen,* Op. 33 (1802), and *Elf Neue Bagatellen,* Op. 119 (1820–22). Familiarity with this earlier music might give the listener the expectation that Op. 126 will be similar to its generic counterparts—and in some ways, it is. In all three opuses, the bagatelles fall in arranged sequences, are scored for piano solo, and involve no extramusical associations.

However, each of Beethoven's bagatelle-opuses is unique. Opus 33 and Op. 119 differ in particular ways: containing *kleine Stücke* composed as early as 1798, Beethoven assembled Op. 33 during a pivotal period in his life, and, perhaps not coincidentally, the opus has a decidedly introspective character beneath its seemingly banal and inconsequential surface; in Op. 119, also an assemblage of brief units completed at various times, Beethoven attempts new and unusual methods of composition. Cone describes Op. 119 as comprising "Experiments in Composition" and analyzes "each piece as an individual essay—as a solution to a specific compositional problem or as an experiment with an unusual technique" (1977, 85). When considering Opp. 33 and 119 forebears to Op. 126, the informed listener might anticipate a work with a casual surface belying an introspective and self-analytic core and/or a collection of brief compositions rooted in musical experimentation.

Opus 126 fulfills both expectations. As Cone's article explains, *Sechs Bagatellen* is compositionally experimental and may be evaluated alongside Op. 119; as well, Beethoven's final set of bagatelles projects a deeply introspective character connecting it to Op. 33. However, Op. 126 reaches levels in these two areas that neither earlier work achieves, as it seems more deeply self-analytic and personal than Op. 33 and more radically experimental than Op. 119.

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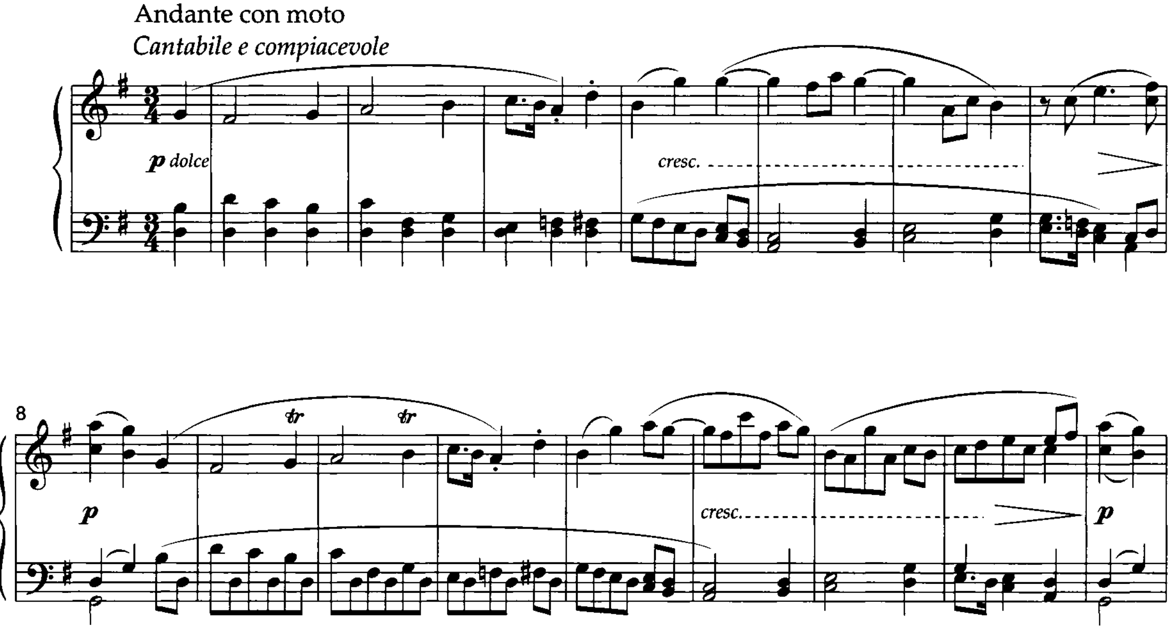
Example 1.18 presents the first sixteen measures of Op. 126/1. These bars present a song-like melody atop simple harmonic progression, and consequently the composition immediately proclaims a kinship with Op. 33/6, the most song-like and contemplative bagatelle of the set. Beethoven reinforces likeness with the earlier work by beginning Op. 126 with an introspective, almost nostalgic aura that relates to the air of Op. 33/6. In Op. 126/1, he emphasizes such an atmosphere by marking the opening measures *cantabile e compiacevole*—song-like and sorrowful.



EXAMPLE 1.18: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/1, MEASURES 1–16

The incipient sound of Op. 126/1 establishes the experimental character of the composition. Beethoven follows an anacrusis, second-inversion tonic triad with a three-measure pedal point on D_3 and harmonizes this bass tone with elementary sonorities. At m. 4, the unstable $\hat{5}$ pedal resolves to $\hat{1}$, but this resolu-

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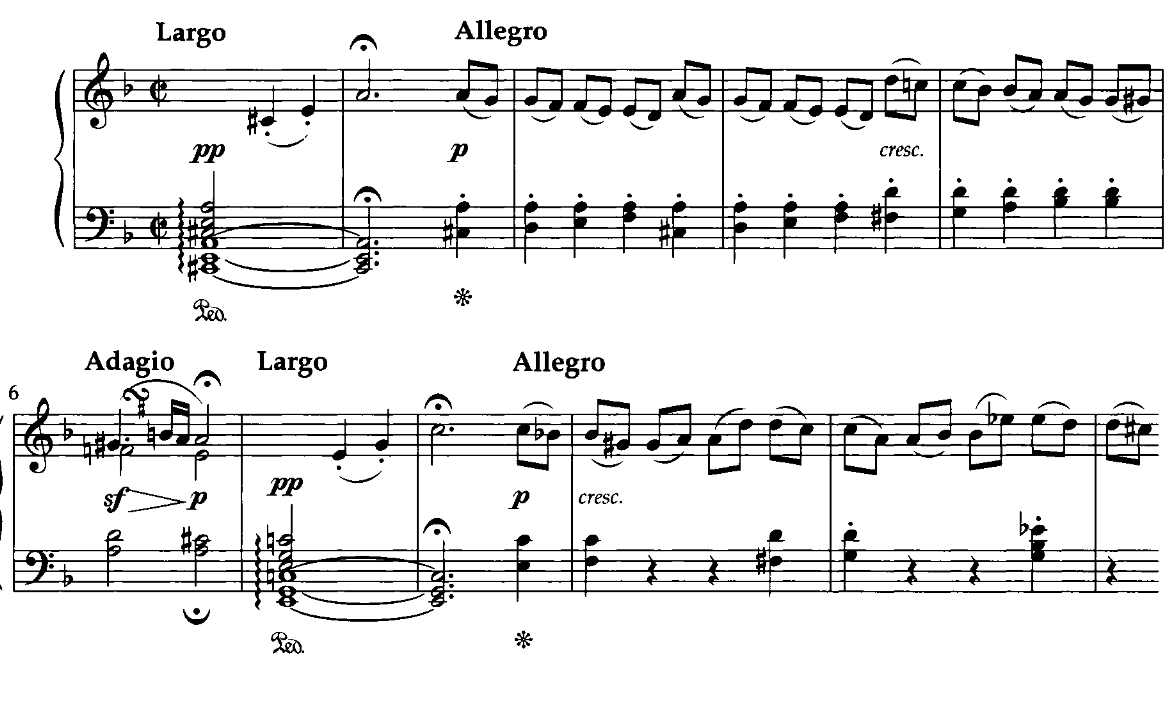
tion does not entirely satisfy, for the bass immediately moves downward and the harmony quickly slips away from the tonic. A fulfilling resolution of the opening instability does not appear until m. 8, where the first phrase concludes and the second half of the opening period begins.

Starting a work with an unstable sonority has precedent in Beethoven's music preceding Op. 126: both the arpeggiated V_6 chord beginning Op. 31/2 and the unanchored ii^6_5 commencing Op. 31/3 are progenitors of the I^6_4 starting Op. 126/1.[6] However, each earlier opus deliberately draws attention to its initial sonority, by either a fermata (Op. 31/2) or repetition (Op. 31/3), and the tempo of neither opening corresponds to the prevailing tempo of the movement that each initiates. Beethoven presents these earlier-composed dissonances as introductory gestures preparing the following music; see Example 1.19.



EXAMPLE 1.19: TWO UNSTABLE INITIAL CHORDS, BEETHOVEN, OPUS 31/2, MEASURE 1, AND OPUS 31/3, MEASURES 1–8

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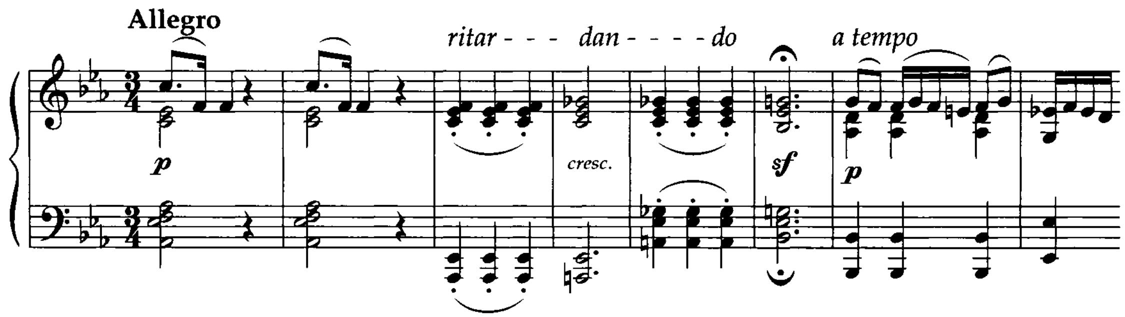
EXAMPLE 1.19. *continued.*



The unstable anacrusis beginning Op. 126 has the same tempo as the principal material it precedes, and neither a fermata nor exact repetition protracts the initial sonority. In Op. 126/1, the anacrusis does not stand apart from the primary musical material (as do the chords opening Opp. 31/2 and 31/3), and Beethoven does not highlight the sonority in any manner. The anacrusis I^6_4 lies within a composite dissonance spanning the first three measures of the work, positioned as nothing special or peculiar; indeed, the bagatelle begins with informal nonchalance.

The casual plainness of the opening dissonance makes it unlike the underlined instabilities of Opp. 31/2 and 31/3. Instead of dramatically emphasizing the opening dissonance, Op. 126/1 begins *in medias res,* with the material appropriately preparing the instability seemingly cut from the score. The particular sort of dissonance the anacrusis embodies reinforces this understanding, for the initial sonority, heard either as an inverted tonic triad or a dominant with a $^6_4$ suspension, does not inaugurate a tonally appropriate compositional beginning. While both integral opening sonorities of Opp. 31/2 and 31/3 are baldly dissonant—neither work begins on a tonic triad, and the bass tones of both are unstable within their keys ($\hat{7}$ and $\hat{4}$, respectively)—the instability beginning Op. 126 is slyly inconspicuous, with its harmony and bass pitch misrepresenting each other and its perfunctory appearance suggesting a truncated preparation.

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However one perceives the chord, the opus seems to start with an already shortened time span that forecasts the upcoming central use of brevity and truncation. The opening material is not as straightforwardly simple as it seems; the mild, yet sparkling, surface has many faces, and every omission increases the musical density.

At m. 21, Beethoven begins a seemingly improvised passage on the B–A gesture first heard in m. 17. The change of time signature from $\frac{3}{4}$ to $\frac{2}{4}$ stresses the newness of this music, as do the slower movement of the left hand and the rhythmic accelerando running from m. 21 to m. 25; see Example 1.20.

EXAMPLE 1.20: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/1, MEASURES 17–31

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Beginning at m. 21, a growing agitation, which culminates at m. 29, transforms the *dolce* composure of the first twenty bars. When abridging the opening material, Beethoven interposes anxious and impassioned music; this is an example of what John Daverio, following Friedrich Schlegel, calls an *Arabeske*. Daverio defines the *Arabeske* as a compositional strategy used centrally by German Romantic composers and which

> can be narrowly constructed as a digression or interpolation within an otherwise straightforward narrative, [although] the *Arabeske* idea is actually far richer in implications. For Schlegel, it describes a deliberately planned moment of negativity in modern art, such that the apparent formal cleft…is there to make a point (20–21).

Precisely this happens between mm. 20 and 21, where the final three melodic pitches of m. 20 emerge and pass through rhythmic and intervallic permutations. By unexpectedly focusing on this simple three-note gesture, the music departs from what is anticipated and turns in a surprisingly new direction. In mm. 1–20, the implication of formal conventionality is deceptive; what the listener initially perceives as *terra firma* becomes an unfamiliar landscape.

The *Arabeske* at m. 21 has a radical and concrete effect on its preceding segment. Measure 16 begins with movement to the dominant key and suggests a forthcoming period similar to the one of mm. 1–16. However, this promised period does not materialize, and instead, the *Arabeske* appears after only four bars. While mm. 16–20 form a would-be antecedent segment and imply a four-bar consequent, the *Arabeske* usurps the subsequent idea. Measures 16–20 thus are better understood as part of a unit including mm. 1–16, with the full seg-

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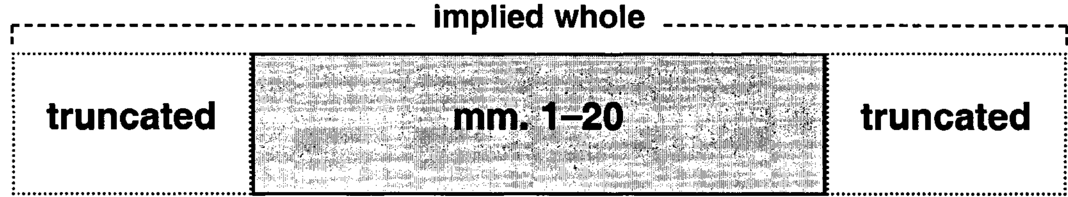
ment lopped off while still in progress and replaced by new material. Measures 1–20 end as they begin, with truncation; see Example 1.21.



EXAMPLE 1.21: TWICE-TRUNCATED OPENING IDEA, BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/1, MEASURES 1–20

This brevity differs from the sort present in Chopin, Op. 28/1, and Webern, Op. 9/1. Chopin hinges his brevity on the transformation of a single measure-long motive throughout his prelude, but Beethoven founds his bagatelle-brevity on the truncation of a multimeasured and sectional unit. Similarly, Webern primarily grounds the brevity in his bagatelle on what is present on the page—the work theoretically implies no missing passages—whereas Beethoven's bagatelle incurs brevity by evoking the absence of material the Classical-era compositional norms imply. All three works have a high, albeit unique, density embedded within their constituent moments; in the case of Op. 126/1, mm. 1–20 incur density partly by suggesting the absence of material. The segment comprising mm. 1–20 becomes more dense not only by what it contains but by what it lacks.

At m. 30, the time signature reverts to $\frac{3}{4}$ and the tune from mm. 1–4 returns, now in the bass voice, on the third quarter-note of m. 31. A series of diminished sonorities at mm. 31–32 obscures the reappearance of the opening melody, continues the post-cadenza music started at m. 30, and causes the octave G in the bass (m. 31) to sound like the fourth note of a diminished-sev-

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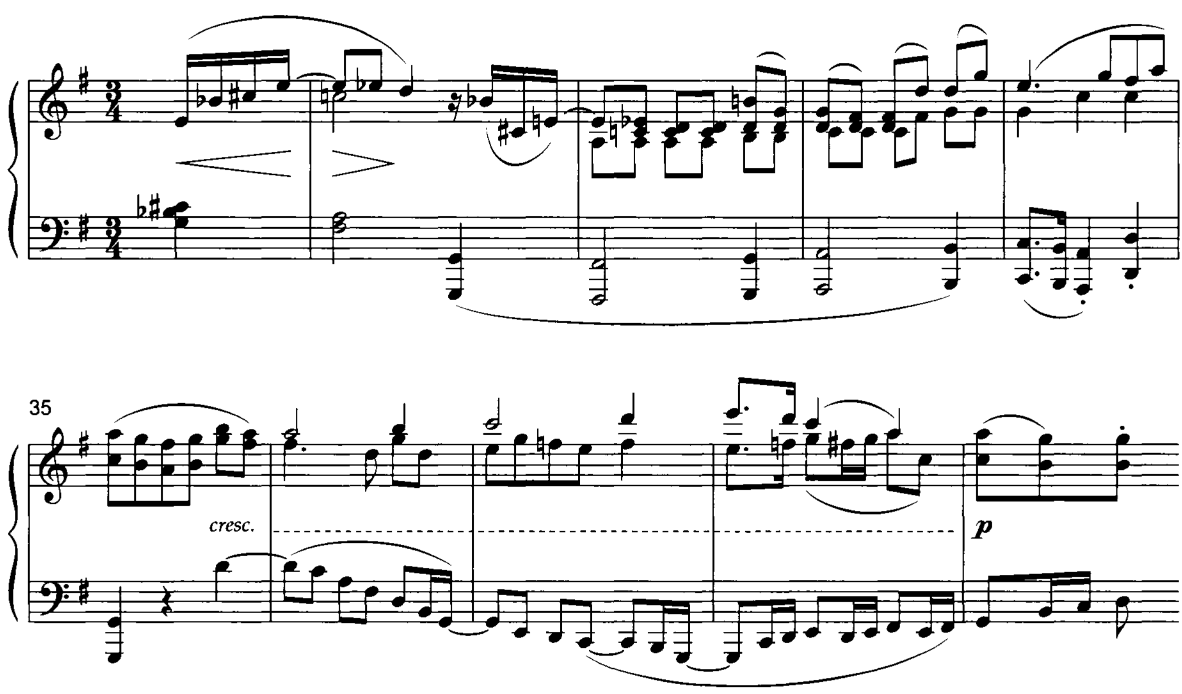
enth chord {C♯, E, G, B♭}; as well, the octave G–F♯ motion in the lower stave echoes the preceding G_3–$F\sharp_3$ (mm. 30–31) and joins the dissonant sonorities to obscure the iteration of the opening tune. The *Arabeske* and the return of the beginning melody thus overlap (mm. 31–32), and after this superimposition the top-stave diminished sonorities subtly transform into tonic, subdominant, and dominant harmonizations of the bass-voice melody (mm. 32–35) before relieving the left-hand of the tune (m. 36); see Example 1.22.



EXAMPLE 1.22: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/1, MEASURES 31–39

The confluence of the post-*Arabeske* material and the reentry of the opening tune hides the beginning point of the one and the stopping point of the other. With the *Arabeske* fading out and the *compiacevole* melody fading in, the music seems to have returned to its opening material by m. 36. Measures 31–35 transition from the *Arabeske* to the tune, but at what exact point is indistinct.

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Measures 39–47 contain closing material built on a two-measure descending line with a second-half chromatic slide ($\hat{5}$–$\hat{4}\sharp$–$\hat{4}$–$\hat{3}$). First appearing in the soprano, the line begins on B_5 and descends to B_4. After an eighth-rest, the downward drift materializes an octave lower, beginning on B_4 and moving to B_3 (mm. 41–43). At m. 43, the descent commences on B_6, an octave above its start at m. 39, and falls to B_5. In m. 45, Beethoven repeats the second half of this final presentation of the closing motive by returning (at the sixth octave) the repeated D of mm. 1–3. The composition ends with an allusion to the close of the beginning motive (mm. 7–8, 15–16); see Example 1.23.

EXAMPLE 1.23: CLOSING SECTION, BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/1, MEASURES 39–47

One thus may consider the overall formal design of Op. 126/1 a sort of abbreviated binary form that does not modulate to the dominant within its first half. However, this reference to a modified binary form is only allusive, as the brevity of each section destabilizes such formal qualification of the bagatelle.

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More accurate is a structural analysis regarding the composition without summoning familiar and predetermined forms, despite the way Beethoven alludes to the shapes of such received skeletons. Considering the design of Op. 126/1 *sui generis*, one might view mm. 1–16 as an A section, 16–20 as B, 21–32/33 C, 31–39 A′, and 39–47 D. Despite its objective accuracy, though, such an orientation is unsatisfactory, for it ignores Beethoven's evocation of binary form in the first sixteen measures. By creating expectations and subsequently denying them, Beethoven camouflages the musical form of the work and makes both proposed understandings dissatisfying.

As he alludes to the familiar, Beethoven fills Op. 126/1 with expectation. The work's generic identity creates the expectation of a kinship with Opp. 33 and 119; the familiar phrase structure of its first sixteen measures creates anticipated similarities in the music to follow; its reference to binary form encourages the listener to await familiar formal trajectories. Truncation and *Arabeske* deny all of these expectations while diminishing the length of the work. In addition, when Beethoven interrupts and discards segments of the bagatelle, truncation and *Arabeske* substitute for what has been stripped away. The remaining music draws attention not only to itself, but to what it suggests. Although these suggested passages are absent, their silent presence haunts the bagatelle and causes it to point beyond itself. The depth of meaning contained on the page consequently increases, and the work becomes more dense.

———

NOTES

1. All examples throughout this study are faithful to the score-publications cited at the end of the bibliography and are reproduced with permission from their publishers.

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2. As all four instruments play *con sordino* throughout the bagatelle, the mute does not generate timbral difference. Although the common use of mutes is important, it helps establish a unified composite atmosphere and does not strengthen the individuality of each instrument.

3. "Ungefähr 1911 habe ich die ‚Bagatellen für Streichquartett' (op. 9) geschrieben, lauter kurze Stücke, die zwei Minuten dauern; vielleicht das Kürzeste, das es in der Musik gegeben hat. Ich habe dabei das Gefühl gehabt: Wenn die zwölf Töne abgelaufen sind, ist das Stück zu Ende" (Webern 1960, 55).

4. *Petit Larousse illustré,* 2nd ed., s. v. "bloc."

5. See Kallberg (133), Eigeldinger, 1988 (passim), and Samson, 1985 (79) and 1996 (157).

6. For an earlier-composed work by Beethoven commencing on I^6_4, see the bold opening of the String Quartet in F, Op. 59/1.

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PART TWO
CREATIVE FREEDOM AND AESTHETIC INDIVIDUALITY

INTRODUCTION

L'austère vérité n'a plus de portes closes.
Tout verbe est déchiffré. Notre ésprit éperdu,
Chaque jour, en lisant dans le livre des choses,
Découvre à l'univers un sens inattendu.[1]

—Victor Hugo, *Les voix intérieurs*

ROMANTIC AND LITERARY FOUNDATIONS OF MUSICAL BREVITY

When crafting work with brevity at its core, a composer must deal with issues resulting from brevity itself. These issues differ from those encountered when creating work of a more standard time frame (see Preface, vii et seq.) and demand that the composer discard strictures and strategies falling beneath the rubric of tonality. Tonality assumes that the future music will span a standard length of time, and the inherited tonal methodologies hinge upon this essential assumption. Consequently, when a composer intuits music of an unusually brief duration, certain aspects of this apriori compositional law must change. The new states these principles will assume within the brief work are especially malleable, and the composer of the brief composition discovers a tremendous range of creative freedom that brevity both inspires and demands.

Chapter One suggests as much by presenting pervasive ambiguity as one manifestation of heightened creative freedom born of brevity and the attendant

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increase in musical density. The Beethoven bagatelles are difficult to approach with an assortment of ready-made formal molds, and ambiguity in the Chopin *Préludes* is not only formal, but harmonic and rhythmic. And of the three works, brevity-inspired ambiguity within the Webern bagatelles is perhaps the most immediately perceivable, with the overtly non-tonal character of the opus yielding uncertainty in virtually every musical parameter. Chapter One examines how some of these examples of ambiguity increase the musical density of Op. 9 by offering varied critical, analytic, and aesthetic outlooks. Ambiguity within the three works greatly results from brevity, as do the composers' discoveries of increased creative liberties that foster high artistic individuality.

Brevity inspires an increased creative freedom insofar as it stimulates self-directed artistry that challenges inherited musical law. Such creative freedom enables and requires the composer to reconsider his or her orientations toward the primary components of music. As Beethoven and Chopin explore new formal options by rethinking the concept of form when they discard received norms, so too does extreme brevity encourage Beethoven to reevaluate the genre of bagatelle and Chopin to reexamine the essential concepts underlying the genre of prelude. In addition, as suggested by the somewhat experimental aspect of Op. 28, Chopin's musings not only address the possibility of harmonizing the motive with different simultaneous chords but question the tenets founding the idea of harmonic progression. Is it imperative that harmony progress through diminished time, or can harmonic progression itself be diminished? What becomes of progression when its once-vital linear sequence is foreshortened?

In Webern's bagatelles, brevity aids creativity by freeing the composer from all preestablished musical syntax and simultaneously bolstering his investigation of elemental acoustic notions. Brevity thus offers Webern a creative freedom beyond that given to Beethoven and Chopin. While Beethoven's inquiries

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in Op. 126 often focus on the formal designs of Classicism and Chopin's creative freedom in Op. 28 takes the additional step of questioning the nature of tonality, neither work discards all compositional tenets of its day. The Beethoven bagatelles, while broadening concepts embodied by Classical formal designs, nevertheless retain the basic ideas of phrase and progression; likewise, although Chopin's preludes enhance concepts underlying harmonic progression, the genre of prelude, motivic malleability, and rhythmic precision, the opus continues to draw upon the tonal notions of harmony and genre, motive and rhythm. Webern takes brevity-born liberty a step further when discarding the complete theoretic orientation of tonality. Consequently, he was free to address the deepest roots of his musical heritage and his own creative motivations; brevity was for Webern a first and essential step toward dismantling the tonal orientation and methodology and realizing a music that seems to emerge from the deepest levels of his uniquely personal artistic wellspring. For example, in his brief work Webern concerns himself not with how to understand a given chord when it lies within a tonal progression; instead, he reconsiders the basic concept of chord and reduces the apriori orientation toward a given sonority to little beyond its particular acoustic properties. Using brevity, Webern can address all musical aspects in a similar manner, with his creative inquiries probing the most foundational of concepts: What is a note? what is a dynamic? what is a motive? what is form? rhythm? timbre?

When Heinrich Poos identifies "the learning and developing personality *[das lernende Subjekt]* [as] the true center of the labyrinthine [Beethovenian] miniature" (29), he sets creative freedom at the ground level of Beethoven's brief music and suggests that stretching the limits of the Classical compositional style is a primary concern of Op. 126.[2] Ninety-odd years later, composers of the Second Viennese School made their *lernendes Subjekt* even less concerned with

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apriori determinants by striving to allow "the fabric of individual musical events"—that is, the raw, acoustic identity of the sound "absen[t] of all mediators"—"[to break] through the surface, [become] visible and [manifest] itself independently of all stereotyped forms" (Adorno 1967, 153). Composers of the Second Viennese School liberated every parameter of their music, form and genre included.

Brevity increased the compositional freedom of the three composers by motivating Beethoven to reconsider the givens of Classicism, Chopin to rethink tonality, and Webern to avoid virtually all received tonal mediators. This extended creative liberty allowed each to imbue his work with greater originality and subjectivity, and part of this originality and subjectivity helped produce the ambiguities of the opuses. The combination of heightened musical originality and subjective ambiguity aligns with the Romantic doctrine; notions of creative freedom and brevity grew from the Romantic aesthetic.

In *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology*, Daverio examines how German Romantic music, typified by the work of Robert Schumann, evolved a "musical fragment system" (58) rooted in forms that gave way "to intentionally fragmented or incomplete structures" (5). Daverio outlines interrelated creative strategies that German Romantic composers, and particularly Schumann, used when creating music with fragmentation or incompletion at its center. He connects these essential aspects to an overarching creative drive that Schlegel calls the 'Romantic Imperative'—"the impulse that 'demand[s] the mixture of all poetic types'" (127).[3]

Daverio reminds readers that Schlegel coined the term *Romantisch* to identify a genre theory grounded on the "notion of the *Roman*, conditioned as it was by his study of Dante's *Divina commedia*, Shakespeare's dramas, and Cervantes' *Don Quixote*" (4). With his *Romantischästhetik*, Schlegel sought to

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> bring together, in a marvelous unity, all the disparate [literary] tendencies and types that had previously been kept separate. The notion of generic mixture... takes center stage in modern poetry by means of the *Roman* as real and ideal form. And this literary form was in turn destined to lend its name to an entire cultural enterprise: hovering behind Schlegel's use of the term *Romantic* is a meaning best translated as 'novelizing' or 'generically mixed' (Daverio, 127–28).

Above, Daverio does not mention temporality. However, the influences of Dante Alighieri, William Shakespeare, and Miguel de Cervantes on Schlegel's idea of the Romantic suggest that this poetic ideal may require an extended span.

Such an idea seems borne out by the work of Schumann, whose principal creative influences include the literary work of Jean Paul Friedrich Richter. Daverio believes that Jean Paul's novels, along with those of "E. T. A. Hoffman, Novalis [Friedrich von Hardenberg], [Clemens] Brentano, [Friedrich] Hölderlin, and Schlegel himself," are "the first clear realization of the ideals articulated in Schlegel's genre theory" (128). Epitomized by Jean Paul, the German Romantic novel is a dense, multisectioned, complex, and sprawling work. Yet, within its tremendous breadth, such a novel often places brief fragments in central formal positions, and these fragments commonly appear as digressions yielding further digressions. Inside such a format, brevity can allow endlessly variant material, and Jean Paul often capitalizes on this option by stitching a multiplicity of divergent brief matter into a many-layered totality. As used by Jean Paul, the novelizing principle places brevity at the surface of an expansive work.

Schlegel understands digression as *Parekbase*, a particular component of his notion of *Arabeske*. He believes that the dramatists of Classical Greece provide early examples of parabasis when presenting a "'speech occurring in the

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middle of a play, spoken by the chorus to the audience in the name of the poet....[Such a speech] was a total interruption of the work, a suspension of its orderly progress'" (Daverio, 28).[4] Related to *Arabeske*, one of Schlegel's central distinctions for parabasis is the presence of an interpolated text that is presented as if coming directly from the author. Such arabesques appear in the genre of novel before the work of Jean Paul; Schlegel recognizes *Don Quixote*, which Cervantes completed in 1615, as an important forefather of the parabasis-arabesque. Cervantes characteristically uses this technique throughout his masterwork by injecting himself into the text as both the narrator of the episodic tale and the subjective commentator critiquing the fanciful meanderings of the don.

In this regard, perhaps the finest example in English of a literary forerunner to both Jean Paul and the three musical works is Laurence Sterne's eight-volume comic opus *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*. With its first two volumes published in 1759, *Tristram Shandy* precedes by more than two decades the earliest work of Jean Paul, the Germanic master of digression. Although the views and writings of Sterne and Jean Paul are unique and differ significantly, Sterne's work nevertheless is a fine English-language example of the literary technique that profoundly influenced Romantic musical composition.

Sterne uses arabesque and parabasis as no mere coloristic devices; rather, his idea of interruption and digression, as well as his self-consciously subjective authorial interjection, supercedes even the concept of plot and provides the novel with its primary basis of formal structure. *Tristram Shandy* is "a book wherein virtually all progression is digression" (Alter, 88). It has "a structure... modeled on the operative character of consciousness," and Sterne conceives such consciousness "in terms not of logical continuities but of the spontaneous association of ideas" (Van Ghent, 7). "[T]elling stories within stories" (Alter, 88) is the principal formal focus of *Tristram Shandy*.

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The start of Chapter 21, Volume 1, portrays Sterne's digressive strategy:

> ——I wonder what's all that noise, and running backwards and forwards for, above stairs, quoth my father, addressing himself, after an hour and a half's silence, to my uncle *Toby*,——who you must know, was sitting on the opposite side of the fire, smoking his social pipe all the time, in mute contemplation of a new pair of black-plush-breeches which he had got on;—What can they be doing brother? quoth my father,—we can scarce hear ourselves talk.
>
> I think, replied by uncle *Toby*, taking his pipe from his mouth, and striking the head of it two or three times upon the nail of his left thumb, as he began his sentence,——I think, says he:——But to enter rightly into my uncle *Toby*'s sentiments upon this matter, you must be made to enter first a little into his character, the out-lines of which I shall just give you, and then the dialogue between him and my father will go on as well again.
>
> —Pray what was that man's name,---for I write in such a hurry, I have no time to recollect or look for it,——who first made the observation, "That there was great inconstancy in our air and climate?" Whoever he was, 'twas a just and good observation in him.----But the corollary drawn from it, namely, "That it is this which has furnished us with such a variety of odd and whimsical characters;"—that was not his…(52).

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The text moves in such a freewheelingly associative manner throughout, passing through asides for which breadth is no matter and that consequently are more apt to be brief than expansive. Indeed, a work with digression as its primary form must keep its non sequiturs brief, lest those flights of fancy transform from digressions into progressions. In the extreme case of *Tristram Shandy*, the book would evaporate if its wanderings were protracted or excised, for they form the essence of the work. In a digression, Sterne himself says as much:

> Digressions, incontestably, are the sun-shine;——they are the life, the soul of reading;---take them out of this book for instance,--you might as well take the book along with them;—one cold eternal winter would reign in every page of it; restore them to the writer;----- he steps forth like a bridegroom,—bids All hail; brings in variety, and forbids the appetite to fail (58).

Not until the sixth chapter of the novel's second volume does Sterne resume the thread of conversation between Tristram's father and Uncle Toby. As if to reinforce the digressive character of all the intermediary material, Sterne continues Uncle Toby's sentence, some ten chapters later, precisely where he interrupted it:

> ———What can they be doing, brother? said my father.—I think, replied my uncle *Toby*,—taking, as I told you, his pipe from his mouth, and striking the ashes out of it as he began his sentence;----I think, replied he,—it would not be amiss, brother, if we rung the bell (80).

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Sterne's novel, "the greatest shaggy-dog story in the language" (Ricks, vii), necessarily centralizes brevity just as it allows the book to evolve without any overt requirement to reach a conclusion. Its chapters, often succinct as a single paragraph, attach to no overarching, all-important plot-structure and ultimately yield a unique, yet seemingly undisciplined and arbitrary, composite form. *Tristram Shandy* embodies the Schlegelian striving toward "the *Arabeske* as total form" (Daverio, 33) and, in so doing, deceptively seems to be "haphazard [and]...formless" (Van Ghent, 8).

The Romantic use of musical fragments evolved from related literary antecedents and first appeared in programmatic music. When nineteenth- and twentieth-century composers used fragments in their work, they incorporated an artistic technique rooted in literary depiction; perhaps consequently, much music using fragmentation engages extramusical associations. After Jean Paul's literary work inspired Schumann to apply the Schlegelian novelizing principle to music, he frequently set the fragmentary within contexts of extramusical association. However, he also used fragmented units within composite formal structures resembling that of the Romantic novel—that is, the fragment became a basic building block of large-scale, interrelated, multimovement works.

Schumann's cycles of character pieces are excellent nineteenth-century examples of these two manifestations of music that appropriate the novelizing principle: brief, fragmentary portions of *Charakterstücke* hold unique positions within his composite renditions of Scenes from Childhood (Op. 15), Forest Scenes (Op. 82), a Carnival (Op. 9), and so forth. Schumann's individual character piece was neither self-contained nor absolute but rather formed a segment of an illustrative totality. As the brevity within the *Charakterstücke* primarily came from digression and incompletion, Schumann's aesthetic orientation toward brevity was to consider it indicative and suggestive of absence.

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By contrast, no extramusical association helps explain or aesthetically justify the central use of brevity in the compositions under study. Unlike Schumann's absences, those within the selected Beethoven, Chopin, and Webern scores attach to no overarching depictive program that helps the listener mentally fill the empty spaces with extramusical images of familiar scenes. Schumann aids his audience members by encouraging them to align the character piece with their own experiences. As a listener to *Waldszenen* already has an idea of what a dramatic presentation of varied forest scenes might entail, he or she augments Schumann's depiction with his or her own knowledge. The listener accepts *Waldszenen*'s brevity-born absences partly because the intended dramatic context is commonly accessible. Neither Beethoven, nor Chopin, nor Webern provides such supports for the listeners of their brief works examined here.

If Schumann titles an opus without explicit dramatic connotation—for example, *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12, and *Nouvelletten*, Op. 21—his use of tonal harmony, despite its necessary modification to accommodate brevity, still affords the listener reasonably familiar musical stability. Without extramusical association, tonality helps mitigate the strangeness of the absences and keeps the music within somewhat comfortable listening space. Although the central brevity of the compositions does arouse the listener's interest and enhances appreciation of the music as especially unique, Schumann's use of modified tonal stratagems—the way he "produced his most striking works not by developing and extending Classical procedures and forms but by subverting them, sometimes undermining their functions and even making them momentarily unintelligible" (Rosen 1995, 655)—provides the listener a recognizable foundation from which to approach the music and to intuit completion of its fragmented passages.

The selected Beethoven and Chopin compositions relate to such an idea. By centralizing brevity and eschewing extramusical association, Beethoven and

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Chopin use absences of strictly musical sorts within Op. 126 and Op. 28, respectively. The two composers do sustain their brief work within somewhat familiar musical spaces by adhering to triadic harmony, but these spaces differ from those which would hold music with a lengthier time frame. While the apriori of tonal thought influences Beethoven's and Chopin's brief work, the two composers uniquely modify this donnée. Brevity allows, even requires, this reworking.

Such creativity enables music that is only partially mediated by external forces and is especially close to the composer's special creative desire. As *Tristram Shandy*, by its use of brevity and digression, obeys "formal laws of its own [yet nonetheless] is...skillfully and delicately constructed" (Van Ghent, 7), so do the three compositions have highly individualized, yet cogent and deliberate, formal designs. By being unbeholden to the dictates of preestablished forms, much like Sterne rejects plot coherence, Beethoven is freer to give Op. 126 a shape that, while faintly hinting at already established arrangements, does not fulfill the obligations those preconceived, external models require; consequently, his bagatelle-opus has an especially individualized formal design. Similarly, Chopin's preludes depart so radically from familiar theoretic terrain that Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger views them as the composer's "precise point of rupture with the inherited tradition of the postclassicists *[Les Préludes représentent précisément le point de rupture avec la tradition héritée des postclassiques]*" (2000, 146). By engaging brevity, Chopin challenges not only Classical-era formal conceptions but attacks the broader ordinations of tonality at the more basic levels of harmony, rhythm, motive, and dynamic. As well, by not filling with extramusical or dramatic association the spaces left empty by the disappearance of certain aspects of tonality, Chopin allows the creative ideas in Op. 28 to be more personal. And at the most extreme, Webern positioned his bagatelles the farthest from outside mediators by forging his opus with disdain for even the most rudi-

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mentary aspect of tonality—the triad itself, and the manifold implications it carries. Consequently, of the three works under discussion, Webern's is perhaps most exclusively born of the composer; indeed, the Webern bagatelle-opus is a fine candidate for a composition as uninfluenced by foreign thought as had been created by 1913.[5]

NOTES

1. "Austere truth no longer has closed doors.
Every action *[verbe]* is to be deciphered. Our bewildered spirit,
Each day, when reading from the book of reality,
Discovers a surprising meaning in the universe" (Hugo, 924).

2. "In seinem Innersten verbirgt das Beethovensche Labyrinth allerdings kein bedrohliches Mysterium: das lernende Subjekt ist das wahre Zentrum der labyrinthischen Miniatur" (Poos, 29).

3. Daverio quotes Friedrich Schlegel, *Fragmente zur Litteratur und Poesie*, no. 586, in volume 16 of *Kritische Freidrich Schlegel Ausgabe*, edited by Ernst Behler, Jean-Jacques Anstett, and Hans Eichner, 35 volumes (Munich, Paderborn, Vienna: Schöningh, 1958–): 134. Also see Daverio, 49–88.

4. Quoted from volume 11 of Friedrich Schlegel, *Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe*, edited by Ernst Behler, Jean-Jacques Anstett, and Hans Eichner, 35 volumes (Munich, Paderborn, Vienna: Schöningh, 1958–): 89.

5. This does not imply that the aesthetic orientations of Expressionism, orientations rooted in a primary appreciation of and submission to the artist's unique creativity, bear no influence upon Webern's bagatelles. Compression and distillation ostensibly spring from Expressionism, and as Expressionism is an artistic movement in which Webern was but one participant, foreign thought does influence his corresponding music. Nevertheless, the focus here is on the dismissal of tonally generated compositional determinants, or, put differently, the replacement of the laws of tonality with the fruits of a creativity emancipated from those laws. Although Expressionism helps bring about the presence of such a libertarian creative practice, it dictates no theoretic specifics other than an emancipation from the perspective of tonality.

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CHAPTER TWO
CHOPIN, OPUS 28

SCHUMANN, LISZT, DELACROIX, AND THE *PRÉLUDES*

Partly through its semblance of the improvisatory, Chopin, Op. 28, intimates a creative origin free of outside mediators. Throughout the work, one repeatedly senses that certain passages and gestures are close to being concrete representations of their immediate moments of revelation and solidifications of their initial mental sound-images. The initial, spontaneous identities of such material seem notated close to the ways they first appeared within the composer's unfettered mind and make problematic a traditionally theoretic comprehension of their more curious aspects. When such quirky music appears in the *Préludes,* Chopin seems to have given his immediate creative impulses priority, and this perception persists despite the inherent impossibility of ascertaining which moments of any given prelude arose spontaneously and appear on the page in their initial conceptual guises and which moments Chopin put in a final state after a compositional process involving modification and revision of their principal ideas.

Knowledge of Chopin's pragmatic orientation toward a prelude as an improvisatory act commencing a recital may lead one to intuit spontaneous qualities within the opus more readily than one approaching the work unaware of Chopin's predisposition. If we do assume that the title, *Préludes,* carries clues about the meaning of the work, we are led to question whether Chopin wanted to give the music improvisational characteristics by leaving spontaneous creative energies largely unmodified in the score. Does Chopin's title suggest not

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that something lengthier should follow any one prelude but that the possibly self-contained opus has an improvisational character and origin?

Franz Liszt, himself a pianist who engaged the improvisational in both performance and composition, seems to have held this idea. Liszt believed that while the "*Préludes* of Chopin are compositions that are ordered in every aspect" (Eigeldinger 2000, 147), the opus did not convey such discipline upon a first hearing. Instead, he found that "[Everything] perceived initially is the sudden arrival of that first inspiration, that earliest élan. [The preludes] have the freedom and the great allure that characterize the works of genius."[1] Liszt considered Chopin's *Préludes* "not only, as their title seems to indicate, pieces intended to be played as introductions to other pieces; [rather,] they are poetic preludes." He connects improvisation and spontaneity with an idea of prelude differing from the one suggested by Schumann, who, while considering Chopin's *Préludes* "most singular," noted that he had "expected something quite different: compositions carried out in the grand style, like [Chopin's] études" (Schumann, 137–38). Schumann believes the *Préludes* are comparable with sketches and ruins; as such, he implicitly considers Op. 28 fragmentary. If this idea necessarily regards the improvisational as incomplete, Liszt does not share such a point of view. Instead of identifying some lack in the *Préludes*, Liszt seems to believe the opus comprises complete compositions that themselves are "ordered throughout in every aspect."

In 1853, painter Eugène Delacroix recalled a past recital at which Chopin performed both notated and improvised works. In his journal, Delacroix writes of leaving the performance with Chopin's friend Albert Grzymala. The two discussed the music they had heard:

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> [Grzymala] said that Chopin's improvisations were far more daring than his finished compositions. They probably take the place of the sketch for a picture compared with the finished work. No! One does not spoil a painting by finishing! Perhaps there may be less scope for the imagination once the work has been sketched out. You receive a different impression from a building under construction where the details are not yet shown than from the same building when it has received its full complement of ornamentation and finish. It is the same with ruins, which appear all the more impressive because of the missing portions; their details are worn away or defaced and, as with buildings under construction, you see only rudiments and vague suggestions of mouldings and ornamentation. A finished building encloses the imagination within a circle and prevents it from straying beyond its limits. Perhaps the only reason why the sketch for a work gives so much pleasure is that each beholder can finish it as he chooses (1951, 183; entry from April 20, 1853).

Delacroix's meditation stands between the thoughts of Schumann and Liszt with regard to the nature of improvisation. By comparing an improvisation to a sketch for a picture, Delacroix believes something improvised is inherently incomplete; such a thought aligns with Schumann's view of the *Préludes* as a book of sketches for future works. Along with Liszt, Delacroix considers improvisation an activity born of an unfettered imagination, and he identifies the results Liszt believes spring from the initial creative élan as primary material implying a forthcoming work. Delacroix adds that he considers the precise

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shapes these improvised building blocks assume as only vaguely, if at all, suggestive of the way their material would appear after being worked into a completed compositional state. In their embryonic and unburnished forms, Delacroix finds the results of improvisation necessarily fragmentary, and this notion conveys additional similarity between the thoughts of the painter and Schumann. Finally, Delacroix suggests that improvisation maintains within its essence an ambiguity allowing "each beholder [to] finish [the sketch] as he chooses." The rudiments of the incomplete edifice—Chopin's improvised prelude—appear to Delacroix's viewer without fixed formality or concretely circumscribed future ends.

In the above thoughts, Delacroix takes an observer's point of view more than he does in the earlier-cited extracts from his journal entry. When erecting a building, an architect begins by setting the physical material of the forthcoming structure on site with an envisioned final form. The architect has conceived the project and drawn a blueprint for the planned edifice; he or she already has exerted the primary creative energies before commencing to erect the envisioned building in real space. When placing the bricks on the lot, the architect knows the dimensions in which those bricks will be mortared together. He or she has completed the sketching phase and moved into that of assemblage.

Consequently, the unfinished building can be completed differently than prescribed by the blueprint only in the mind of the impartial observer unconstrained by this larger plan. Unlike the architect, such an observer statically apprehends the raw building material; the bricks and mortar constitute a material *bloc* stripped from the creative process that determined its future purpose and placed it at the ready. For the architect, the originator of the structure, an overarching creative process that both precedes and succeeds the on-site positioning of the bricks and mortar holds the crude materials within their proper

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places. While ambiguous to the observer's eye, the building's final state is concrete in the mind of its creator.

Ambiguity results from an uninformed apprehension of the raw material of the work and, in Delacroix's example, is available only to the onlooker; an indefinite forthcoming shape is easier for the observer to infer than the architect. The passer-by sees the bricks and mortar on the lot as if removed from their creative process, and consequently he or she can imagine a forthcoming building that differs greatly from the planned reality. Contrary to this, the audience member at a musical performance can not mentally complete the composition as he or she hears it, for performed music is perceived temporally rather than as if suspended outside of time. For a listener, music perceived during performance exists in a constant state of revelation. The auditor does not finish the moving composition in his or her mind's eye, for the physics of hearing binds the creativity of the audience member to the momentary disclosure of sound.

Improvisation likewise binds the creativity of the composer to the immediate acoustic disclosure. As such, the nature of improvisation requires that a composer/performer relinquish, to a degree, his or her creative command of the moment and submit to its spontaneous dynamics. When wholly receptive and nonresistant to the immediate musical impulse, the composer is an onlooker-become-conduit treading the musical pathway improvisation sets. Composition becomes part of the integral experience of improvisational spontaneity, and through such spontaneity the composer seems both to invent music and to allow the music to unveil itself.

Thus is the mysterious nature of improvisation, a creative energy bringing about the possibility to solidify the spontaneous ideas by notating them faithfully to their initial presentations. Such practice is described more accurately as transcription rather than composition, for the act of composition implies

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modification and manipulation of the rudimentary gestures of the music—ideas which may or may not have surfaced through improvisation. In this sense, to compose is to work something from its initial nebulous state into a finished form. In so doing, the composer impresses an outside influence—at the least, of himself or herself—upon the received material and transforms the creative freedom of the uncriticized moment, captured by the transcription, into a state with a conscious will imposed atop the initially notated gestures. When following improvisation's lead, the composer *qua* transcriber knows neither the path the revealing music may take nor the state it ultimately might assume.

So considered, improvisation is both an activity and an intangible force, something both born of and giving drive to the moment of spontaneous performance and composition. One can gauge the degree of unmitigated immediacy by assessing the extent to which the musician relinquishes conscious control over the consequent sound, suppresses his or her preferences, and follows unreservedly the lead of the improvisation. Such openness reserves judgment and suspends critique of the revealed material from compositional, theoretic, and aesthetic angles. When the performer/composer transcribes the immediate improvisation, be it acoustic or imaginary, he or she creates a sketch.

Conceived as transcription of an original creative impulse, musical sketching relates to the architect who drafts raw materials before fixing a blueprint. For the composer whose finished music results from the working of sound-gestures into a score, setting down the unrefined beginnings of musical gestures is similar to an architect placing the bricks and mortar of a future edifice in a ready position. A subsequent composition thus can determine the status of the sketch's degree of completion, but without concrete examples of the creator having modified the initial ideas—as, say, the Beethoven sketchbooks—one cannot definitively say that the sketch itself is unfinished. A sketch can be

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regarded as absolutely fragmentary only when abstracted from and contextualized with an evident whole; it can be found incomplete only if modification or manipulation of its material positively exists. By contrast, the stand-alone sketch is a transcription of its revelatory moment. It is a *causa sui*, a solidification of *Einfall*, and in itself implies nothing more.

The word *Einfall*, used throughout the remainder of the present text to represent the moment of creative inspiration and revelation, draws from a lengthy footnote in Theodor Adorno's *Philosophy of Modern Music*:

> "*Einfall*" is not just a psychological category, a matter of 'inspiration' *[Inspiration]*, but a moment...mark[ing] the irreducibly subjective element in this process and, by means of its inexplicability, further designates this aspect of objectivity and the process of becoming, which...contains this subjective moment as a driving force. On the other hand, as essence, "*Einfall*" is also possessed of objectivity (74).

Translators Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster append these comments by noting that "The German word '*Einfall*'...is impossible to translate; it involves the idea of a decisive inspirational occurrence bordering upon revelation which becomes the basis for a work of art." As will be seen, this particular notion of *Einfall* differs subtly from that conveyed throughout the present text by the term *Idee*, which is used to identify the first scribbling, the initial material representation, of the mental sound-revelation. The *Einfall* is strictly imaginary, whereas the *Idee* crudely attempts transcribing the *Einfall* on the page.[2]

In high degree, brevity in the *Préludes* causes Schumann and Delacroix to respond to the opus as an assortment of sketches or ruins, for both believe

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brevity necessarily indicates something lengthier and is implicitly fragmentary. Their view does not consider the *Einfall* self-contained and complete but sees the fruit of the revelatory instant as a point from which to begin compositional activity. For Schumann and Delacroix, brevity and the sketch imply both each other and a working process yet to come. Conceived as such, neither brevity nor the sketch is its own end; instead, both are subordinate to a consequent work.

Yet, the Chopin preludes, despite their brevity, do not necessarily suggest a work with a more standard time frame and of which each prelude is only a part. Opus 28 is no sketchbook for some hypothetical subsequent composition, although the *Préludes* do allude to being a collection of sketches—not as pure representations of *Einfälle,* to be sure, but as *Einfälle* which have been submitted to a compositional process. This process has no recourse to standard musical—especially formal and theoretic—orientations; rather, Chopin's artistic activity is marked by an artistic liberty afforded by brevity. *Préludes* comprises sketches only insofar as its units are improvisatory in style and importantly engage brevity; these two sketch-aspects intrinsically link within the opus.

Central to the way many preludes seem to retain the primary shape and character of their *Einfälle* is their use of but one basic, and brief, motive. For example, the idea of the *Einfall* underlying the opening prelude is the "single, unified gesture" (Agawu, 7) of a rising and falling arpeggiation divided between the right and left hands. Occupying two sixteenth-note triplets, with the first ascending and the second descending, the top voice of the arpeggiation splits from the ascending half and continues to rise while the second triplet descends. Chopin conceives the discrete voices of the motive merging in harmonic accretion, and he reinforces this accretion by giving the entire measure an all-embracing sustaining pedal; see Example 2.1.

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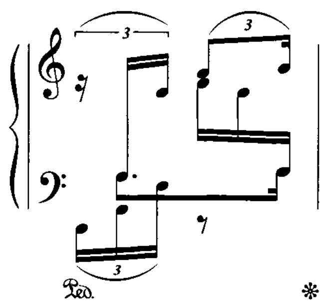

EXAMPLE 2.1: *IDEE*, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/1

So might we represent the concept underpinning the first prelude's *Einfall*, the creative thought antecedent to and grounding the initial representations of pitch, dynamic, harmony, consonance, and dissonance. Born of the *Einfall*-as-revelatory-moment, the *Idee* in Example 2.1 is the fundamental notational basis of Chopin's opening prelude, and the compositional freedom delivered of brevity allows such an idea to ground the entire span of the composition.[3]

EINFÄLLE
OPUS 28/2

A brief idea underpins many preludes of Op. 28, including the second; see Example 2.2.

Prelude 2 begins by presenting an essential motive, Motive A, in the left hand. Built of two discrete voices, the composite pattern within the lower stave has on its surface a steadily undulating figure. Chopin increases the density of this motive by crossing its outside line above its inside line with every eighth-note by restraining the inside voice within a compressed intervallic range—for example, in its first representation, a major third—and causing the outside voice to oscillate between the lowest and highest pitches of the composite motive (in

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EXAMPLE 2.2: CHOPIN, OPUS 28/2

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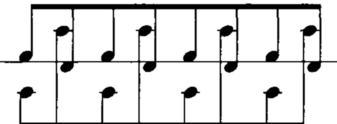
the first three measures, E_2 and G_3). This essential figure transforms during most of the prelude, and one is led to believe the implied *Einfall* is the basic notion of two distinct voices that oscillate in steady eighth notes, with one of the lines regularly crossing the other; see Example 2.3.



EXAMPLE 2.3: *IDEE* FOR MOTIVE A, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/2

The movement of the outer voice back and forth across the inner voice is difficult to hear, for Chopin gives neither line any distinction. At best, a listener might intuit the presence of an inner voice by dint of its compressed intervallic range and, after perceiving this line, become aware of the oscillating outer voice as a second discrete linear component. If the pianist wishes to bring out the linear distinction, he or she may perform each voice subtly differently; however, Chopin does not suggest that he wants such a distinction, for he only identifies the two voices visually. As the examples of density seen in Chapter One, this slight detail seems a bit superfluous and causes one to wonder why Chopin bothers with such an intricate representation of a concept scarcely noticeable during the musical performance.

Assuming Chopin did not complicate the notation for complexity's sake alone, one reason for such unusual beaming may be that the lower-stave motive, as initially presented, is a near-transcription of its *Idee*. As the lines have no aural distinction, it is doubtful Chopin expects an audience member to hear the

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two voices distinguished from one another or wants the pianist to expose them during performance. If the crossing of the two voices is not wantonly complex, it instead may represent the original musical concept. Chopin supports such an understanding by supplanting the dual-voice notation with single-beamed dyads from m. 3 until the end of the prelude, thus simplifying performance after revealing how the pianist should apprehend the two lines.

By contrast, the second motive of Prelude 2, played by the right hand, is monophonic. This Motive B first appears in m. 3, where the initial E_4 drops to B_3 before the line ascends to D_4 (m. 4). At m. 5, the second half of the motive starts with the same pitch on which the first half ends. This second half spans two full measures and sustains its final tone a half note into its third bar (m. 7).

At m. 8, Motive B shifts up a perfect fifth for its second presentation, which lasts until midway through m. 12. The second two-part statement of Motive B is rhythmically identical to its first appearance with one exception: its initial pitch lasts only a dotted quarter note (B_4, m. 8), not a double-dotted half note (as E_4, m. 3). Chopin may diminish this starting tone to give the new lower-stave harmony time to aurally solidify before returning Motive B at a new pitch level. As Motive A sounds alone for two full measures before Motive B enters at m. 3, the transposed left-hand harmony at m. 8 likewise receives time to establish itself before the right-hand melody returns. One also hears a related rhythmic idea in the third and final presentation of Motive B (mm. 14–19).

The *Idee* of Motive A also involves arrhythmic components. Steady and invariant, devoid of accent or articulation, and contained beneath sweeping slurs that all but destroy any internal phrasing, Motive A has neither a set time frame nor rhythmic definition. Rather, the components of the Motive are quite the opposite: its two lines oscillate, gently crossing each other, and its *piano* dynamic continues until a diminuendo starts at m. 13 and lasts until the figure

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disappears. Unlike Motive B, Motive A effects no rhythm; it simply pulsates and conveys no sense of beginning or ending. Similarly, the *Idee* underlying Motive B has no exact pitches but only a general contour, and this contour obtains throughout the composition without regard for the changing intervallic sequence of the Motive (mm. 14–19).

The resulting pitch discrepancies between Motive B's three presentations offer clues about the puzzling key of the prelude. When Chopin begins the third iteration of the Motive on A_4 (m. 14), he drops his earlier-established practice of ending one statement and starting another on the same pitch-class (cf. mm. 7–8). In addition, the third presentation does not adhere to the P4–m3 opening intervallic sequence (cf. mm. 3–4 and 8–9), as a half-step ascent to F_4 (mm. 15–16) follows the P4 descent (A_4–E_4, m. 15). Much of the reasoning behind this important F♮ lies in its telling glance toward the home key of the prelude.

The absence of specific pitches within either motivic *Idee* joins with the durational fluidity of Motive A's initial articulation and the arrhythmic essence of Motive B to augment the sensation of improvisation. Neither Motive has an apriori temporal or harmonic structure that forces it to fit some preestablished logic; instead, the first *Ideen* are amorphous and yield an improvisational semblance that reflects greater compositional liberty. In this regard, the motives also allow themselves to be fitted to a brief overall time frame, which in turn supplements the composer's creative freedom and enhances the pervasive sense of improvisation.

The pitch-definition of each Motive within the finished score connects to a liberated creativity, and these pitch-choices themselves suggest the improvisational. The *Idee* of the lower-stave motive (Example 2.3, above) allows Chopin to give the gesture pitches that reinforce its improvisational aspect. For example, the first two measures contain a single harmony that seems to levitate, suspend-

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ed and undulating, in timeless space. The subtle detail of two voices oscillating, the outside line regularly crossing the inside line, helps keep the *Idee* interesting despite its nonprogressive and static surface. Such subtleties help contour the passage as they effect static fluctuation: although the E-minor triad does not progress, it has internal movement.

Chopin augments the complexity of the lower-stave motive by making the second eighth note of the inner voice a chromatically altered lower neighbor. Flanking these recurrent—for Jim Samson, "grating" (1985, 75)—dissonances with their pitches of resolution throughout the prelude, Chopin creates a regular chromatic disruption of each harmony.[4] Such recurring dissonance and consonance give the Motive additional definition and shape, and the nonharmonic tone reinforces the improvisational aspect by further clouding the musical texture. When the pianist pedals with Chopin's lengthy slurs, the dissonant pitches muddle the left-hand harmonies and lend the music additional instability. With these regular dissonances, Chopin adds uncertainty and mystery to each four-note segment and builds the ambiguity of the composition.

The right-hand Motive momentarily emerges from the thick texture of the lower stave, hovers for a brief moment, and then steps aside to allow the timeless, roiling, subterranean darkness of the left hand to return to the fore. This intended dramatic effect, as well as the rhythmic variance of Motive B's opening pitch results from the stasis so central to the *Idee* of Motive A. The oscillating rhythm of the left hand and the obfuscated/obfuscating harmonies reinforce the emerging character of the three top-stave melodic passages. The hazy lower stave adds to the overall sensation of musical spontaneity.

Without knowing the key of the prelude, the listener likely will infer from the outset that the composition is in E minor. The first presentation of Motive A hinges about an E-minor triad with a chromatically altered lower

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neighbor nonharmonic tone, A$\sharp_2$, and the initial statement of Motive B begins on $\hat{1}$, ends on $\hat{5}$, and uses F♯—not F♮—within its delivery (m. 5). Yet, the sensitive listener may not be convinced that the top-stave melody, mm. 3–7, indeed is in the key of E minor, for the presence of D♮ (mm. 4–5) rather than D♯ lends the tune a particularly modal flavor; consequently, the listener may hear the melody in E Aeolian rather than E minor. If considering the tune modally, one also might argue that it is not in E Aeolian at all, but rather B Aeolian—an idea implied especially strongly in mm. 5–7.

The harmonies of mm. 4–5 do not contradict the E Aeolian view, as the left hand in m. 4 suggests a second-inversion G-major triad (III^6_4) and in m. 5 presents a suspended fourth that resolves appropriately ($VII\flat^{4-3}$). At m. 6, the D triad itself resolves to what is heard as a G-major chord, although no fifth is present within the sonority. Following this, the nonharmonic tone pattern shifts the dissonant pitch to the fourth eighth note.

Effecting further ambiguity of a central pitch is the left-hand harmony of mm. 4–7, where Chopin suggests G as the primary tone. With an elementary harmonic motion in mm. 4–6, the lower stave implies both G Ionian and G Major (V^{6-5}_{4-3} – I). Consequently, three pitches vie to be the central one within mm. 1–7: E, G, and B.

One likewise may infer different central pitches during the second presentation of the brief composite idea about which the prelude is structured. Like the E-Aeolian understanding of mm. 1–7, one may maintain a B-Aeolian melodic understanding throughout mm. 8–12; the presentation's beginning on B, ending on F♯, and use of C♯ (m. 10) and A♮ (mm. 9–10) support this Aeolian appreciation. Or, as the first presentation of Motive B, this following presentation may be understood to be modally centered about its final pitch (and thus in F♯ Aeolian). While the left-hand harmonies reinforce suggestion of B Aeolian by

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presenting a B-minor triad spanning m. 8, a second-inversion D-major triad in m. 9, and a suspended-fourth motion in m. 10, they also can be analyzed as if in D major and iterate the previously heard $\mathrm{V}^{6-5-}_{4-\!-3}$ motion in mm. 9–10. Lastly, the passage can be considered in D Ionian mode. The three pitches vying for centrality in mm. 8–10, then, are B, D, and F♯.

Chopin departs from this terrain in m. 11 by not resolving the A-major triad as he did the analogous D-major chord of mm. 5–6. Rather than offer a D-major triad at m. 11, he presents the most curious harmonies of the composition. Considering the second eighth note of the group of four nonharmonic and including the top-stave pitch within the harmony, m. 11 begins with a half-diminished seventh chord (D♯–F♯–A–C♯). This sonority changes into a diminished triad on the second half of the following measure (A–C–D♯). Were the top-stave F♯ to have continued, the chord would have been a fully diminished seventh chord (D♯–F♯–A–C), and this sonority does appear at m. 13. None of these harmonies align with A minor.

The prelude takes its first tentative steps toward its home key in m. 14. The right hand augurs such a transition by beginning the final presentation of Motive B on A, although no clues about the impending shift to A Minor appear at the moment the the pitch sounds. When it enters, the A fits the composite D♯–F♯–A–C diminished seventh sonority; not until the third quarter note of m. 14 does Chopin begin to move the composition toward its home key.

This m. 14 sonority is piquant: F–A–B–D♯. As mentioned above, its lowest pitch is the first time Chopin uses F♮ in the work (the E♯ of mm. 8–9 figures differently), and this tone, spelled as it is, points toward the eventual shift to A minor. Yet, the most important aspect of the moment is its harmony, the analytic implication of which makes this the precise instant the composition begins to lay claim to A minor. The chord is a French augmented sixth chord ($\mathrm{II}^{6+}_{\substack{4\\3}}$), which

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seems to push toward a resolution on the dominant. This implies that the dominant would be an E-major triad; see Example 2.4.

EXAMPLE 2.4: ONE IMPLIED RESOLUTION, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/2, MEASURE 14

Instead, the chord resolves not to an E-minor triad but to a second-inversion A-minor triad (as in Example 2.5).

EXAMPLE 2.5: CHOPIN'S AUGMENTED SIX-FOUR-THREE, OPUS 28/2, MEASURES 14–15

Although this chord points toward the home key, m. 15 does not solidly establish A minor as the tonic, for a full cadence is not achieved until the final two bars of the composition. As the top-stave F♮ begins to move the music into its home key, so too does the augmented six-four-three chord allude to A minor and destabilize E-minor as the tonic triad.

Ambiguity links to the brevity permeating all formal aspects of the composition. This brevity is both a consequence of the possibly unmodified repre-

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sentation of the two motivic *Ideen* and a means of implying no true point of beginning or ending. The creative freedom yielded by brevity allows the transcription of music that dodges apriori formal designs and maintains ambiguity at its core. An essential brevity initiates the fluctuation between modality or tonality in both Motive B and the unstable harmonies of Motive A, and it encourages the inference that both motivic presentations suggest glimpses of a contiguous, yet untranscribed, whole.

The timeless quality of Motive A especially encourages such an understanding. As an example, the prelude's first two measures contain an invariant presentation of the static, pendulum-like movement of the *Idee*. The music within these bars commences as if already in motion and changes only with the entry of Motive B (m. 3). The left-hand motive does not force the right hand to intrude precisely when it does, and if Chopin had wanted to continue repeating Motive A for another measure, or for another ten measures, he would not have destroyed the essential identity of Motive A by its continuation or Motive B by its delayed entry. Although when Motive B comes into view (m. 3) it forces the pitch material of Motive A to metamorphose harmonically, the subsequent alterations to the left-hand pitches themselves imply no necessary consequent motion; neither do the left-hand pitches of mm. 1–2 require any following material. The harmonies of Motive B force the right-hand pitches to change.

In addition, Motive A brings Motive B into temporal space (m. 3), and after the right hand fades to nothingness (m. 7), the left hand gets away from time by returning to its original stasis. Like the earlier solo presentation of Motive A (mm. 1–2), the left-hand oscillation of m. 7 needs not change as it does after only one measure; indeed, the pendulum may continue indefinitely.[5]

The temporal open-endedness so essential to the left-hand motive, as well as to the modally regarded right-hand melody, characterizes the prelude.

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Because neither motivic *Idee* has an implied consequence, Chopin can notate each with particular brevity without threatening its fundamental identity. Dialectically, by both the physical limitation of time and the creative freedom such a limitation inspires, the brevity of the two motives encourages Chopin to notate them especially closely to their *Ideen*.

The composition does not solidify itself within the home key until its final bars, which contain the first material that implies motion by immediately referring to apriori tonal syntax. Motives A and B recede by m. 21, and with their recession, the first clear harmonic motion of the prelude emerges: an E-major triad, a B-major triad, and another E-major triad (m. 22). Above these three chords is the pitch-class B. While the lower-stave E–B–E motion implies I–V–I, the would-be $\hat{5}$ common to all three chords compromises the finality of the second E-major triad by yielding an imperfect authentic cadence.

The composition does not end on the first chord of m. 22, but it continues by offering its most implicative sonority, an E dominant-seventh chord on the second half of the measure. This harmony moves where it must, the A minor triad of m. 23, and it is the initial moment within the score that the listener can perceive the home key. Because this also is the first instant when Chopin resorts unreservedly to traditional triadic syntax, it is where the work finally arrives in temporally implicative space. Chopin here allows received compositional strategy to mediate his creative freedom, and thus the aesthetic individuality of the moment, and it may be no coincidence that he closes the prelude at this instant.

The work's temporality begins coming into focus a few bars earlier, during the third presentation of Motive A (mm. 14–18), where a different pitch-class first appears to end the antecedent unit and to begin the consequent unit. Earlier still, in the top stave of mm. 12–14, the protracted A_4 of m. 14 prepares the forthcoming introduction of F♮ and the augmented six-four-three. Considering

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this composite preparatory gesture, one may infer that Chopin reluctantly brings the composition into a more traditional temporal sphere and savors this moment of peripeteia by delaying entry of the material that sets the work inexorably rolling toward its home key.

The prelude continually evokes a sense of improvisation, and from m. 14 until the end of the composition Chopin seems to be moving liberally and freely toward the tonic stability. The dissonances about the second-inversion A-minor triad (mm. 14–15) gradually unfold and reinforce the sensation that the music is moving mysteriously toward its home key, through its *a cappella* top-stave passages (mm. 17–18 and 20–21), and into its final, unambiguous cadence. As a quasi improvisation, the prelude blurs the line between its *Einfälle* and the controlling presence of the composer. Throughout the composition, Chopin suggests that although he knows where he ultimately is taking the music, he discovers the exact route toward that final destination moment by moment as the improvisation unfolds.

The F♮ of m. 16 is the most dynamically emphasized pitch in the composition, following as it does the lone crescendo of the work, and the continual reduction of Motive A, which begins fading at m. 13, reinforces the stress on the F♮. After the Motive vanishes following m. 16, it returns as a brief recollection (mm. 18–19) before permanently disappearing into m. 19. The temporal gently replaces the atemporal, and with the full arrival of measured and deliberate time, the composition ends. By using F♮ in mm. 16–17, Chopin critically modifies the *Idee* of Motive B as he alters the timelessness essential to the prelude's underlying *Einfälle*. He progressively engages within the composition received musical syntax, and with the full arrival of apriori-based clarity, he ends the prelude.

———

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EINFÄLLE
OPUS 28/4

The fourth prelude has a basic conception related in many ways to that of the second. Both have a lower-stave harmonization of a monophonic right hand; *piano* is the primary dynamic of each prelude, although expressive dynamic alterations are more frequent in Prelude 4; the compositions have similar expressive moods; their tempos are much the same; and both have perplexing harmonic motion. As well, both preludes hover about the edges of time, with their lower staves brought into rhythmic measure more by the need to align the two staves than by bearing implicit progressive movement within themselves.

Yet, the lower staves of the two preludes are conceptually different. As seen in Example 2.3, the *Einfall* for the left hand of Prelude 2 merges two voices within composite harmonies that oscillate back and forth, whereas the lower stave of Prelude 4, seen in Example 2.6, contains repeated block chords that simultaneously sound all constituent pitches but nevertheless recall the left-hand movement of Prelude 2. This repetition, as in the second prelude, helps quell the need for the left-hand harmonies to change. When a chord does change, it generally does so by stepwise alteration of some of its component pitches. The conceptual differences between the two preludes are slight, and the net effect of the material on their lower staves similar: at virtually any isolated moment, neither left hand necessitates harmonic movement.

The *Einfall* for the music contained within the lower stave of Prelude 4 is the source of the left hand's rhythmic simplicity, and effecting harmonic change not through traditionally used methods of progression but instead via descending stepwise motion enhances this principal characteristic of the underlying motivic concept.[6] Repetition is a second component of this *Einfall*, and a third is

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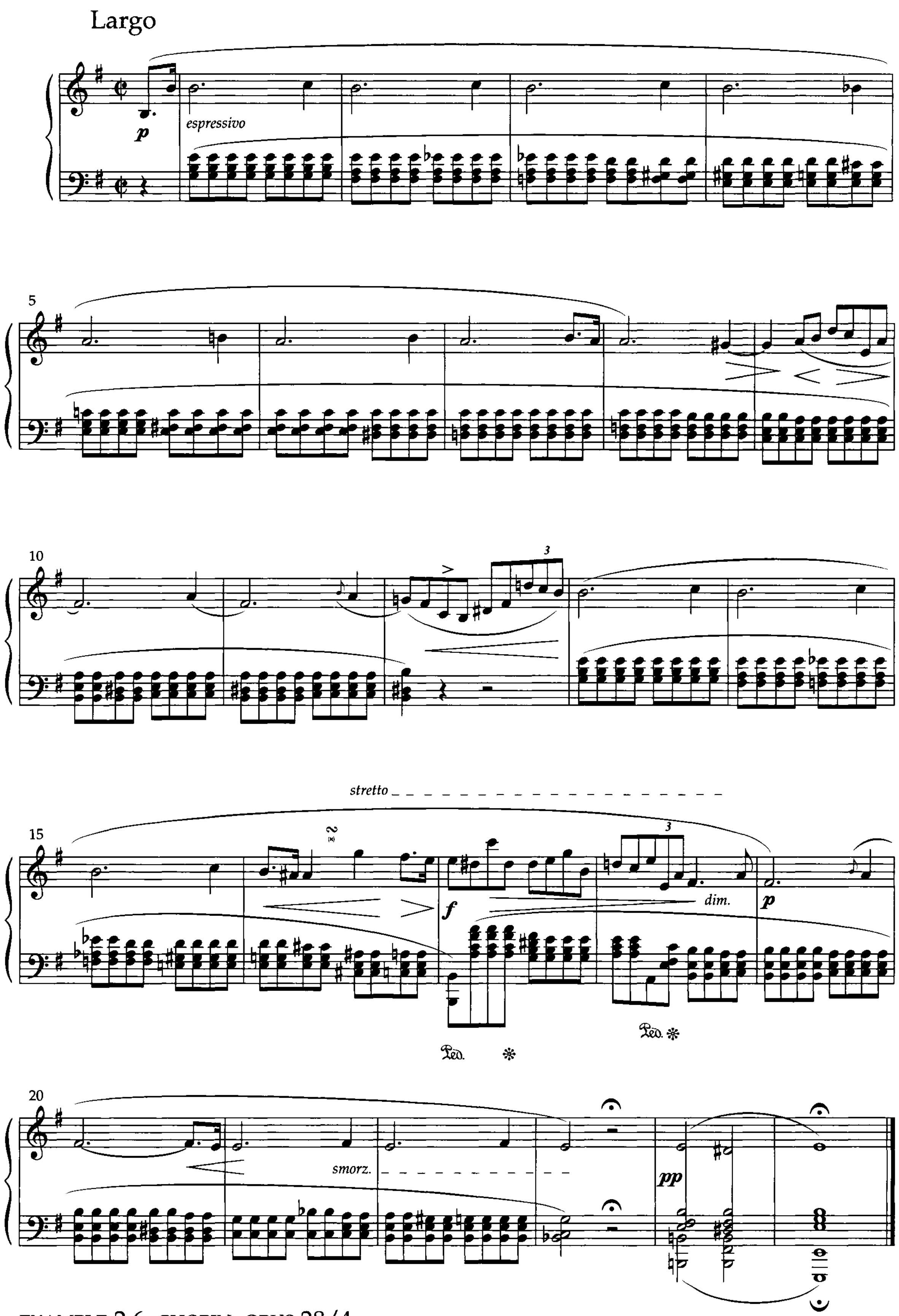

EXAMPLE 2.6: CHOPIN, OPUS 28/4

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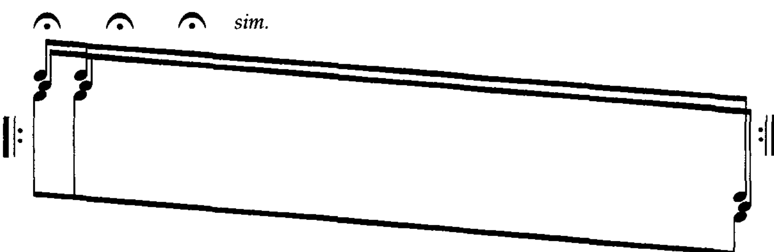
the idea that the slow, stepwise descent may be reinitiated at will (see mm. 13 and 19). This tripartite *Einfall* may be represented as in Example 2.7, with the essential concept of the prelude comprising the elements of (1) an unmeasured, contoured descent; (2) block chords which repeat, in steady eighth notes, for various lengths of time; and (3) repetition of elements one and two.



EXAMPLE 2.7: *IDEE*, LOWER STAVE, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/4

The right hand of Prelude 4 conceptually differs from that of Prelude 2 by not fading in and out and by having no dynamic subdivision; the monophonic top-stave line in the fourth prelude engages no silence until the moment immediately prior to the final cadence. In addition, the motive is not as rhythmically defined as Motive B in Prelude 2, but the top-stave material of Prelude 4 moves through a series of long and short tones that, while notated with exact durations, seem to float as if conveying no rhythmic motion. The specific durational values of the notes are not as crucial to the linear concept as the idea of a melody that alternates between long and short tones, its held pitches released by the respiration of the brief ones.

This *largo* musical breathing is a central aspect of the concept underlying the top-stave voice. A second aspect is the disruption of these long–short repetitions through linear figuration. Such disruptions occur three times within the prelude—in mm. 9, 12, and 16–18. These moments receive prominence from

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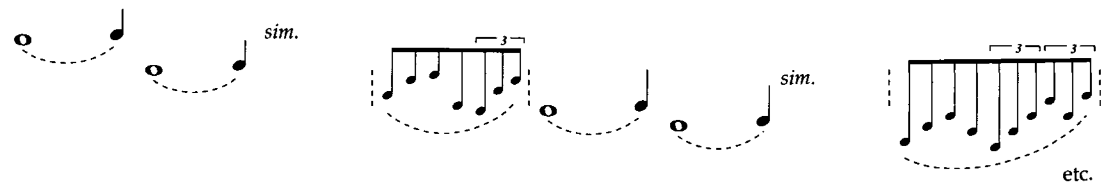
their impassioned movement, and as dramatic high points they retrospectively lend direction to the contiguous right-hand line. In these three instances of ardent motion, the melody fills definite rhythmic space, and the turn and two dotted-eighth-sixteenth gestures in m. 16 and the triplets in mm. 12 and 18 serve to enhance this temporalization. Apart from these well-defined deviations from the slow and conceptually unmeasured stepwise motion, the right hand receives forward direction from only the pitchwise descent. However, while the slope characterizes the linear contour of the line and implies at any moment a consequent slide to a still-lower frequency, the descent itself does not suggest how long the total drop will, should, or must continue. The top-stave *Einfall* thus may be an atemporal idea of a slow and unmeasured descent interrupted by temporal and dramatically emphatic bursts; see Example 2.8.



EXAMPLE 2.8: *IDEE*, TOP STAVE, CHOPIN, OPUS 28/4

Preludes 2 and 4 juxtapose rhythmically and arrhythmically conceived musical gestures. The suggested *Einfälle* underlying the material within both works, devoid of harmonic definition, accost the notion of precise temporal measure, and the core brevity of the two compositions allows the works to retain much of their initial time-challenging conceptions. Musical brevity itself similarly confronts the idea of time as something that passes only through

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directed motion—as something that must *progress*—and admits into the composed space central elements of an unmeasured sort. In a brief composition, linear time is not something upon which the representation of sound—here, the musical score—must rest. Instead, like Wagner's idea of endless melody as something that continually evolves and elides its cadences, the particularly brief composition can encroach upon the frontier of endlessness, that border demarcating entry into what Ferdinand Hand calls "the idea of the infinite in reverse, discovered in the smallest possible form *[die Idee eines Unendlichen in umgekehrter Form möglichst Kleinen an]*" (Brandenburg, 54).

NOTES

1. "Le point de rupture marqué par les Préludes n'a pas échappé à Schumann ni à Liszt...[Liszt:] 'Les Préludes de Chopin sont des compositions d'un ordre tout-à-fait à part. Ce ne sont pas seulement, ainsi que le titre pourrait le faire penser, des morceaux destinés à être joués en guise d'introduction à d'autres morceaux, ce sont des préludes poétiques....Admirables par leur diversité, le travail et le savoir qui s'y trouvent ne sont appréciables qu'à un scrupuleux examen. Tout y semble de premier jet, d'élan, de soudaine venue. Ils ont la libre et grande allure qui caractérise les œuvres du génie'" (Eigeldinger 2000, 147).

2. The term *Idee* has been borrowed from Schoenberg, who used it to connote the union of the musical conception *[Konzeption]* and its representation *[Darstellung]*. "The conception does not need logic,"he writes, "[but] the presentation needs logic" (1995, 376). Although his notion of *Idee* may not align incontrovertibly with the use of the term in the present text, *Idee* nonetheless seems suited to identify the first step after the *Einfall.*

3. A protracted time frame also can heighten creative freedom, albeit somewhat differently: Protraction explodes the body of received musical law, while diminution erases it. Similarly, the meaningful content of the extended work tends toward open-endedness, while that of the diminished work often becomes more focused and dense.

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4. Samson attributes these dissonances to figuration and counterpoint, and he notes the influence J. S. Bach's music had on these aspects of Chopin's preludes: "In both Bach and Chopin consistency of figure and contrapuntal integrity...provide sufficient justification for severe and often highly unorthodox dissonance...of a kind almost unknown among [Chopin's] immediate predecessors but not infrequent in Bach" (1985, 75).

5. Had Chopin given the initial B_4 of the gesture (m. 8) the same duration as the initial note of the first motivic appearance, the left-hand change would have aligned with the return of Motive B.

6. Eigeldinger considers these block chords comprised of three discrete voices that move in first species counterpoint. Coupling such an idea with the descending slope on which they travel, he relates Chopin's prelude to the *Crucifixus* in J. S. Bach's Mass in B Minor. Eigeldinger also suggests that the left-hand motive of Prelude 2 "may use the *Dies Irae* as its prototype [*lequel semble participer d'un archétype du type* Dies Irae]" (2000, 145). The dramatic themes of *Dies Irae* and *Crucifixus* relate, and Eigeldinger observes that an additional aspect the two works share is the putative beginning of both in E minor, the "tonality traditionally used in the Baroque era to depict lamentation *[tonalité de déploration traditionnelle dans la peinture baroque des affects]*" (2000, 146).

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CHAPTER THREE
BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126

> Artistic forms are totalities and complete systems wherein the mental spirit becomes manifest. We therefore must inquire repeatedly about the relation between formal structure and poetic substance (21).[1]
>
> —Heinrich Poos, "Beethovens ars poetica"

IMPROVISATION AND FANTASY VERSUS THE BAGATELLES

Creative freedom rooted in brevity appears differently in Beethoven, Op. 126, and Chopin, Op. 28. While brevity helps Chopin realize a work with limited *Ideen* which together form composite motivic units (as seen in Examples 1.10 and 1.11), in his bagatelles Beethoven linearly juxtaposes radically different compositional segments and emphasizes their individuality. Chopin's preludes have extremely brief motivic *Ideen* at their foundations, but Beethoven's bagatelles present standard-lengthed musical thoughts that progressively develop but tend to be interrupted by emphatically divergent ideas prior to reaching their own goals. Chopin maintains continuity of the primary material grounding his *Préludes*; Beethoven destroys such continuity in Six Bagatelles.

Interruption and divergence strongly characterize Op. 126. As discussed in Chapter One, Beethoven's use of these creative strategies within the context of brevity helps increase the density of the work and make ambiguous the ultimate formal design of the bagatelle at hand (in Chapter One, Op. 126/1). If an

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Einfall underlies the finished opus, it may be the idea to regularly interrupt and sever the principal segments of a given bagatelle. Discontinuity is one irreducible concept of the work.

Perceiving the immediate and seemingly impulsive shifts of idea, character, and mood in one of Beethoven's bagatelles, a listener may hypothesize that the opus incorporates spontaneous creative energies, and such a hypothesis may evoke the genre of fantasy. The ideas of Gustav Schilling, when describing what he believes would be the state of a fantasy's creation, seem applicable to the creatively spontaneous origin to which Beethoven's bagatelles allude:

> The notes come to [the composer] vividly, with uncommon facility, clarity and immediacy. They become symbols of his own natural language, expressing effectively, spontaneously and in undiluted purity the emotion latent within him....Perceiving everything with blazing intensity, he seizes his instrument and plays in such a state that sounds pour out from within him in what is called free fantasy. In the moment of inspiration, he snatches his pen and captures for posterity in an act of composition the vision of pristine beauty that his prophetic eye has discerned (Huray and Day, 468).

Written circa 1840–42, Schilling's decidedly Romantic view of the "inspired" act of composition understands acoustic improvisation as the first phase when creating a free fantasy. The second phase, transcription, is a pen-to-paper task subordinate to the initial creation of sound.

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An earlier expression of the idea of free fantasy is found in the musical scores and critical texts of C. P. E. Bach, whose *Versuch über die wahre Art, das Clavier zu spielen* (1753/62) anticipates by about eighty years (if not indeed providing a model for) Schilling's above-cited mid-nineteenth-century thoughts. In the final chapter of his Essay, Bach investigates the notion of the free fantasia, which he designates as a work that is "unmeasured and moves through more keys than is customary in other pieces" (430). Two paragraphs later, Bach clarifies what he means:

> A free fantasia consists of varied harmonic progressions which can be expressed in all manner of figuration and motives. A key in which to begin and end must be established. Although no bar lines are employed, the ear demands a definite relationship in the succession and duration of the chords themselves...and the eye, a relationship in the lengths of notes so that the piece may be notated (430).

Unlike Schilling, who believes the ideas of a free fantasy are "symbols of [the composer's] own natural language, expressing...in undiluted purity the emotion latent within him," Bach thinks that a free fantasy must respect certain apriori rules. While the work may—indeed, should—proceed through a variety of keys and harmonic progressions more liberally than a normal composition, the free fantasy nonetheless is bound to the unshakable notions of key and progression. As well, although the fantasy should be without exact measure and bar lines, its pacing submits to the dictates of the ear, itself influenced by the established theoretic ideas of key signature and progressive harmony, and the eye, which must comprehend the musical material and thus demands concrete

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and sensible notation. Bach's idea of free fantasia differs from Schilling's insofar as Bach believes the genre is not wholly free and transcribed explicitly as envisioned by the composer's "prophetic eye" but is emancipated from preestablished musical orientations only to a mitigated extent.

Nonetheless, Bach believes the freedom of a fantasy is less constrained than that of a prelude. While the fantasy is self-contained and -referential, the prelude is performed on "occasions when an accompanist must extemporize before the beginning of a piece" (Bach, 431), with its degree of freedom tempered by the forthcoming composition. As a prelude

> prepares the listener for the content of the piece that follows, it is more restricted than the fantasia, from which nothing more is required than a display of the keyboardist's skill. The construction of [the prelude] is determined by the nature of the piece which it prefaces; and the content or affect of this piece becomes the material out of which the prelude is fashioned. But in a fantasia the performer is completely free, there being no attendant restrictions (431).

As discussed in Chapter Two, despite their restriction of material and essential brevity, Chopin's preludes precede no consequent works. While Bach does not consider brevity something necessarily detrimental to and preferably avoided in a fantasy, he does advise that "When only little time is available for the display of craftsmanship, the performer should not wander into too remote keys, for the performance must soon come to an end" (431). Bach continues,

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> Moreover, the principal key must not be left too quickly at the beginning nor regained too late at the end. At the start the principal key must prevail for some time so that the listener will be unmistakably oriented. And again before the close it must be well prolonged as a means of preparing the listener for the end of the fantasia and impressing the tonality upon his memory (431).

To Bach's mind, brevity is not especially liberating; rather, brevity incurs apriori restrictions that are suppressed when creating a more protracted fantasy. Consequently, while a fantasy may span a relatively brief space of time, Bach believes a lengthy fantasy is freer than a brief one. The need for the work to give its principal key an appropriate amount of time in both its beginning and end is a requirement born of no imperative to satisfy some inherent directive of the work but rather tries to sufficiently orient the listener. The requisite beginning and ending stays in the home key additionally threaten the option of a brief free fantasia by diminishing the time available to explore ever-more distant keys.

The longer the proposed fantasy, the more elaborately and self-generatively the music may evolve. Implicit to Bach's concept of free fantasia is the notion that to achieve greater creative freedom, the work, and thus the improvisation, must have at least moderate temporal breadth. For Bach, the freest improvisations occupy ever-protracted lengths of time and continually delay their requisite return to the opening material (i.e. the opening key). Thus comprehended, the extension of time is central to heightening creative freedom during the improvisation, and such a temporal management differs from that which either Chopin or Beethoven uses in Op. 28 and Op. 126, respectively. Although these opuses seem related to improvisation, they are neither transcribed improv-

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isations nor *freie Fantasien*: When augmenting time, the composer of the free fantasy realizes an increased creative liberty, whereas Chopin and Beethoven, when composing the opuses under study, realize heightened freedoms of invention as they diminish time.

Brevity is the locus of discrepancy between the free fantasia and *Sechs Bagatellen*. Similar in this respect are Chopin's preludes, although the two opuses have different *Einfälle* underlying their material. While the primary structural idea of Chopin's first prelude, for example, is the reexamination of a brief motivic idea, Beethoven's principal formal concept in the bagagelles is the thought to have continually developing material regularly be interrupted by the interpolation of markedly divergent, and self-evolving, matter. *Continuity made discontinuous*: Such is the *Einfall* underlying Beethoven, Op. 126.

Brevity thus is part of the creative thought underpinning Six Bagatelles. While improvisation may figure as part of Beethoven's initial creative activity, and while the sense of improvisation is created and perhaps intended by the finished work, the bagatelle-improvisations are modified conceptually in the score. As Beethoven freely interrupts and truncates them at either end, he deliberately makes the bagatelle-improvisations brief. Although it yields the sensation of spontaneity, the finished score of Op. 126 does not resemble a harmonized continuity draft; instead, *Sechs Bagatellen* is a composed opus comprising extracts from discrete and self-contained musical thoughts. Beethoven's finished work has a composite form that is critically dependent on a brevity born of the fragmentation and juxtaposition of uniquely discrete creative ideas.

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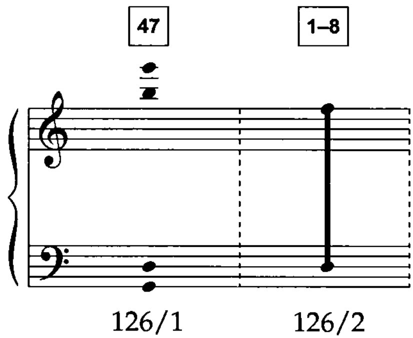
FRAGMENTATION, TRANSFORMATION, AND FORM OPUS 126/2

Analysis of Op. 126/2 highlights brevity-rooted creative freedom and aesthetic individuality. An initial outburst of *allegro* sixteenth notes moves the music immediately away from the placid, *cantabile* ending of the prior bagatelle, and Beethoven further gives the second bagatelle its own identity by distinguishing its pitch range from that of the preceding work's closing measure. The first bagatelle ends with an open sonority comprising a top-stave B_5/G_6 and a bottom-stave D_3/G_2 while the second bagatelle uses pitches from D_3 to F_5 in mm. 1–8; see Example 3.1.



EXAMPLE 3.1: PITCHES OF THE CLOSING SONORITY, BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/1, AND PITCH RANGE OF THE FIRST EIGHT MEASURES, BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/2

The intervals closing the first bagatelle are separated by two octaves and a major sixth, and the first eight measures of Bagatelle 2 span nearly the entire distance between the two intervals of Bagatelle 1. As well, the bagatelles juxtapose unique dynamics: while the first bagatelle ends with a placid *piano*, the second begins with a resolute *forte*; see Example 3.2.

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EXAMPLE 3.2: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/2, MEASURES 1–8

Nevertheless, the two bagatelles share certain compositional aspects, commonalities that reinforce the linkage between the two works. Each iteration of the closing gesture in Bagatelle 1 (mm. 39–46; see Example 1.23) begins with a three-articulation anacrusis, and this relates to the three-articulation upbeat gestures in the opening bars of Bagatelle 2. In addition, the prominent $\hat{5}$–$\hat{1}$ leap between the final upbeat-pitch of the lower-stave closing gestures in the first bagatelle (D_4–G_4, mm. 40–41; D_5–G_5, mm. 42–43; and D_2–G_2, mm. 44–45, mm. 45–47, and m. 47) anticipate the $\hat{1}$–$\hat{5}$ leaps in the top-stave portions of the second bagatelle's inaugural flurry (G_3–D_4, anacrusis–m. 1 and mm. 1–2). Such gestural continuity mitigates the disconnect between the two compositions despite the pointed transition from Bagatelle 1 to Bagatelle 2.

The first eight measures of Op. 126/2 comprise two distinct, brief halves. The agitated first half, Idea A, begins with a brusque call-and-response between the two staves, with the top-stave "call" in the anacrusis and the left-hand "response" in the initial half of m. 1. Following this, Beethoven repeats the

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right-hand call, after which he transforms the arpeggiations into alternations of essentially stepwise lines lasting until the third eighth note of m. 4.

On the fourth eighth note of m. 4, the music immediately changes. The dynamic switches to *piano*, and a three-voice texture replaces the dialogue of the preceding bars. The dominant harmony (m. 4, first half) moves to a V/iv, briefly engaging C minor; not until the C♯ at m. 7 is the dominant sonority firmly established. The new composite gestures of mm. 4–8 form Idea B.

Differences between the two four-bar phrases reinforce the individuality of these passages and dialectically form a satisfying eight-bar phrase. Idea A is rapid and energetic; Idea B comprises lengthier note-values than Idea A and has a leisurely, *legato* quality. In addition, the inner of the three voices constituting Idea B sounds a single pitch, G (mm. 4–7), before dropping to F♯, the leading tone of the home key. This three-measure G helps anchor the directed movement of the passage to the dominant, realized at m. 8, and differentiates the two Ideas. With this held tone, a static image hangs in the background of mm. 4–8 and contrasts the rapidly moving character of mm. 1–4.

Measures 8–12 repeat mm. 1–4, and mm. 13–14 begin by repeating the start of Idea B. However, the interior voice is different in the new presentation, as it lasts a full half note in m. 14 and does not articulate the final eighth note of the bar (as in m. 6). This subtle difference announces that the forthcoming Idea-statement will be unique rather than a carbon copy of the earlier presentation. In m. 15 Beethoven meets this expectation by modulating to the relative major and maintaining the B♭ tonality until the repeat at m. 26; see Example 3.3.

Having established a sixteen-bar structure with two clearly demarcated halves that themselves comprise two brief halves, at the end of m. 16 the bagatelle deviates from the formal anticipation encouraged by mm. 1–16. Rather than present a complete statement of the first sub-phrase (Idea A), mm. 16–17

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EXAMPLE 3.3: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/2, MEASURES 8–26

offer the starting four-note attack as an arpeggiation of a B♭-major triad, and instead of an immediate lower-stave response, a rest follows the triadic arpeggiation. The left hand dramatically breaks this momentary pause with an emphatic F_2. The arpeggiation-idea returns immediately in the right hand (mm. 17–18), the left hand reiterates its pitch, and the right hand simultaneously releases the final tone of the arpeggiation. No gap divides the release of the right hand and the attack of the left, and the moment offers no silence.

A distance equal to the spaces between the right-hand arpeggiations of the anacrusis and m. 1 and those of mm. 8–9 (see Examples 3.2 and 3.3) separates the apreggiations of mm. 16–17, but the lower stave contains no arpeggia-

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tion-response as before. No outburst of sixteenth notes follows the right-hand call; instead, a descending top-stave line works against the pedal-point F_2, and a steadily ascending third voice joins the texture (mm. 19–23). At m. 23, the closing section for the first third of the bagatelle begins.

Measures 16–26, the final segment of mm. 1–26, thus begin by seeming to start a statement of Idea A, albeit one in a new key and pitch range. However, Beethoven denies this anticipation by dropping the scalar portion of Idea A and proceeding to material drawn from Idea B. As well, the music elides half of Idea B and evolves mm. 18–22 from the descending line of m. 7. Beethoven protracts the brief section by sequencing a four-pitch line born of a fragment of Idea B.

The immediate switch from Idea A to a fragmented and then protracted Idea B immediately demonstrates a compositional strategy especially used in this work. In mm. 16–17, the omission of the linear frenzy from the posterior half of Idea A truncates the gesture, and in mm. 18–22 truncation and protracted exploration remove the beginning and closing gestures of Idea B and augment fourfold an interior four-note passage. Truncation fragments and makes brief this presentation of Idea A, and development elongates a brief portion of Idea B.

Transformation also characterizes the second third of the bagatelle. Beginning with a top-stave melody and left-hand harmonization, m. 27 seems to introduce material new to the composition, although its *cantabile* melody derives from mm. 18–22. As seen in Examples 3.4 and 3.5, the top-stave tune brought out in m. 27, like the melody of mm. 18–22, originates in mm. 7–8. Beethoven abstracts and develops by itself this brief segment within Idea A.

Such forward-moving motivic development suggests improvisation, with extension of the interior voice (m. 14), sequencing of the melody (mm. 18–21), subtle alteration of the final right-hand pitch (mm. 22–26), and free elaboration of the top-stave *cantabile* passage (mm. 27–41) evolving from one to the other.

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EXAMPLE 3.4: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/2, MEASURES 27–41

Although the melody gains depth as it passes through its series of immediate and facile transformations, no sense of compositional labor seems to underscore these linear developments. Instead, the changes seem to arise naturally in the moment, as if resulting from the immediate act of improvisation.

While he elongates and explores the brief cell taken from Idea B in the aforementioned measures, Beethoven also continues to diminish Idea A (mm. 42–49). The consequent portion of the Idea (mm. 16–18) already jettisoned, the duration of the silence originally separating the two arpeggiations (m. 17) lengthens; consequently, the music halts in mm. 42–49; see Example 3.6.

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EXAMPLE 3.5: TRANSFORMATION OF THE SOPRANO VOICE, BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/2, MEASURES 7–8, 15–16, 18–22, 28–34

EXAMPLE 3.6: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/2, MEASURES 42–49

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Instead of an immediate left-hand response to the right-hand call (mm. 42–43), silence answers the top stave. As it precedes the lower-stave arpeggiation (mm. 44–45), silence also distances the left-hand passage from its antecedent right-hand call. The essential motive, then, diminishes to become a single, isolated arpeggiation surrounded by a field of silence. As Idea B extends through improvisation, Idea A becomes its most brief denominator through the distillation of its *Einfall* and effects its separation from all surrounding material.

Ideas A and B first appear as two equal-lengthed halves of an eight-measure phrase (mm. 1–8). However, each half uniquely evolves soon thereafter, and these evolutions respectively form the basis for the two large formal sections of the composition. Through the course of the bagatelle, rather than appear as complementary halves within a single complete gesture, these two Ideas contain distinct and self-contained portions that have no imperative need to join as a composite unit. The opening eight measures deceptively suggest differently and encourage the listener to apprehend the two Ideas within the context of the full eight-bar phrase and to anticipate the forthcoming music to function with such a formal orientation. This does not happen; Beethoven misleads the listener by generating an expectation of such formal norms and then dissociating the two four-bar halves of the initial composite phrase. One result is that the formal concept of Op. 126/2, like that of the first bagatelle, is especially unique to the composition. And as in Op. 126/1, an essential brevity leads the form of the second bagatelle to be both open and closed: open insofar as brevity drives apriori mediators from Beethoven's creative impetus, and closed insofar as brevity cannot contain ever-developing musical thought.

Idea A does not cease evolving when Beethoven distills its *Einfall* and brings it into naked, unaccompanied relief (mm. 42–49); instead, the Idea continues to mutate during the start of the final third of the composition. After being

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stripped to its most brief essence, Idea A builds back up by what seems a method of improvisation related to the way Idea B also seems to develop improvisationally. At m. 50, the two staves merge to sound the four-note *Einfall* in simultaneous octaves; additionally, both the rhythmic drive and the *sempre forte* dynamic propel the music forward once more. An octave-doubled line from mm. 50–53 reactivates the call-and-response, and at m. 54 the two voices split again into independent halves. The rhythmic silences created by rests in mm. 50–53 (or, to be inclusive, mm. 42–53) disappear when the top and bottom staves regain their independence, and the music passes through a somewhat oblique harmonic passage that additionally helps shift the composition into high gear; see Example 3.7.

EXAMPLE 3.7: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/2, MEASURES 50–57

In m. 58, the most aggressive music of the bagatelle begins—a bass line moving in oscillating sixteenths and implying (with the right-hand) V^6_5/G.

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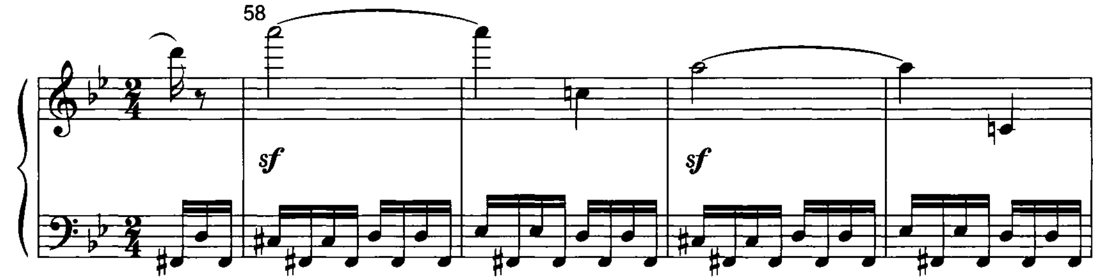
Lasting through m. 59, the two-bar gesture contains one static harmony, and mm. 60–61 repeat the gesture (with the right hand transposed down an octave). At the beginnings of both two-measure passages, dynamic markings of *sforzando* emphasize this recycling aspect, as does the single static chord of mm. 58–61 that, while implying a dominant sonority, needs not move within any particular time span. Although the harmony is tonally unstable and must change eventually, for the moment its repetitive, circling bass motion momentarily contributes to its temporal suspension.

At m. 62, the sonority shifts to a diminished chord, {D, F, A♭}, and at the second quarter-note of m. 63 the fully diminished-seventh harmony, {B, D, F, A♭}, appears. This chord functions as a dominant in C Major, and the root G does not appear until the final sixteenth of m. 65. Measures 62–65, then, ostensibly sound $V^{7\ \flat 9}$/C—{G, B, D, F, A♭}—and the overall dissonance begun at m. 58 sustains throughout the eight measures. However, the two hands swap material at m. 62, with the top stave taking on the sixteenth-note gesture and the lower stave assuming the larger-note-value/leaping-interval gesture. Consequently, the sixteenth-note passage establishes the harmony of mm. 58–61, and the big-interval gesture assumes those duties in mm. 62–65; see Example 3.8.

To effect the harmonic movement from V^7/G (mm. 58–61) to $V^{7\ \flat 9}$/C (mm. 62–65), Beethoven transposes the large-interval gesture of the first sonority



EXAMPLE 3.8: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/2, MEASURES 58–65

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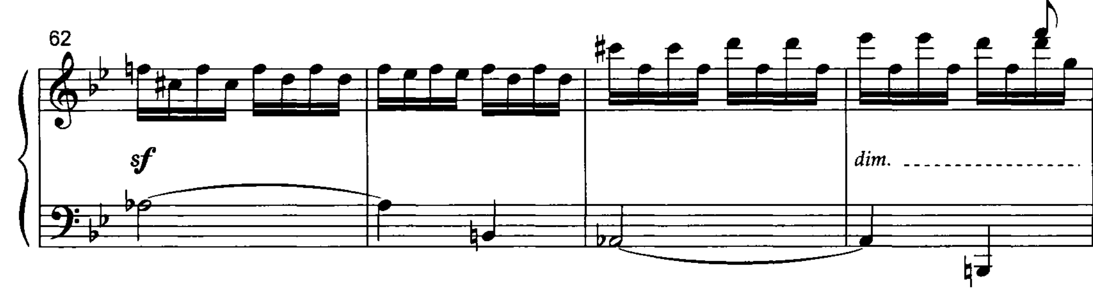
EXAMPLE 3.8. *continued.*



down a half step. When the gesture shifts from the top stave to the lower, the voice leads across registers: the A_5 (mm. 60–61) moves to $A\flat_3$ (m. 62). He also inverts the sixteenth-note gesture by placing the static pitch at the top in mm. 62–65 rather than keeping it at the bottom (as mm. 58–61) and by transposing the tone down a half-step. Yet, the moving pitch-classes of the sixteenth-note passage remain unchanged, with the C♯→D→E♭→D motion maintained throughout mm. 58–65. Although these eight bars allude to improvisation, their embedded subtleties, which essentially color a simple dominant–dominant harmonic motion, attest to both the density of the measures and the deliberate workings of the composer.

At m. 66, Idea A again changes, as the two-note oscillations of the previous four measures become triadic arpeggiations. The following top-stave material (mm. 66–73) includes modified presentations of the arpeggiation-gesture that begins the composition. Steady quarter-note left-hand octaves and the first diminuendo of the bagatelle (mm. 65–67) distinguish differently the character of the Idea in mm. 66–73. Although the diminuendo becomes a crescendo in mm. 68–69, the dynamic reversion to a diminuendo occurs at m. 70, and the intensity reduction continues until reaching *piano* (m. 78). In mm. 65–78, the Idea thus assumes a directed transformation of mood, and the frenzied, energetic tone established in mm. 58–65 gradually subsides; see Example 3.9.

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EXAMPLE 3.9: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/2, MEASURES 66–81

Beethoven enhances the mellowing of these measures by transforming the rhythm from to (m. 73). The sixteenth notes become eighth-note triplets, and when the final sixteenth note of the *Idee* vanishes, the figure's internal movement metrically slows. As well, while maintaining its quarter-note rhythm, the left hand further tames the gesture with intervals other than bare octaves. The diminuendo ends at m. 78, and in m. 79 Beethoven prepares the cadence of mm. 80–81. This cadence is a diminished iteration of a gesture used earlier (mm. 23–26).

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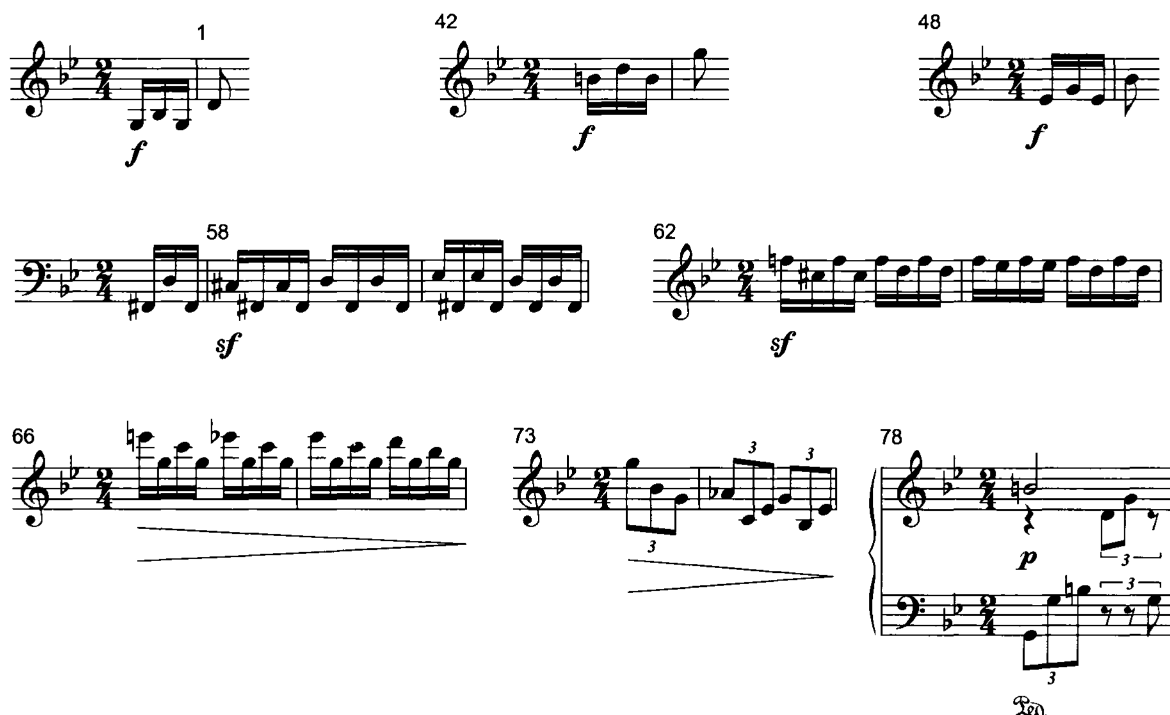
Measure 78 is the goal the music seeks from m. 66 onward. Yet, as the Idea of m. 42 begins moving at m. 50 toward the energetic *sforzando* passages of mm. 58–61 and 62–65, and as all music within mm. 42–79 derives from the three-pitch, four-articulation *Einfall* underlying the opening bar of Idea A, this final third of the bagatelle deceptively seems to evolve naturally and improvisationally. Transformation of the *Einfall*, which embraces the entire section, strengthens this improvisational sensation; see Example 3.10.



EXAMPLE 3.10: TRANSFORMATION OF THE *EINFALL* FOR IDEA A, BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/2, MEASURES 1, 42–43, 48–49, 57–59, 62–63, 66–67, 73–74, AND 78

Most curious in the above example is the G-major triad of m. 78. This chord follows the retonicization of the home key, G minor (m. 77), and the parallel major emphasizes m. 78 as a point of both arrival and a new beginning. Although the complete section does commence with an arpeggiated G-major

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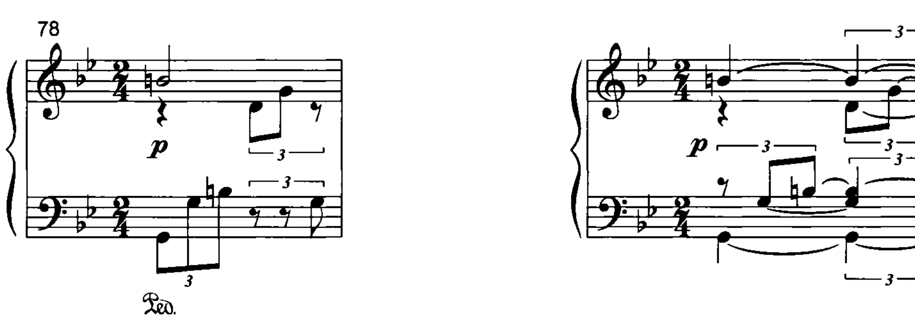
triad (mm. 42–43), the earlier chord assumes a dominant function; by contrast, G major is the tonic triad in m. 78.[2] The use of this chord as a substitute tonic further positions m. 78 as the musical goal following the half-cadence of m. 41.

One editorial distinction strengthens m. 78 as a point-of-arrival: the bar contains the bagatelle's only sustaining pedal. The absence of any attendant pedaling reinforces the linear quality of the initial appearance of Idea A (m. 1), and this quality continues with the absence of pedal accompaniment until m. 78. The pedal with the G-major triad in m. 78 transforms the primary focus of the arpeggiation from horizontal to vertical, as the triad hypothetically becomes a *bloc* of simultaneously held tones at the moment all its pitches are ringing. The musical motion ceases for an instant; see Example 3.11.



EXAMPLE 3.11: TEMPORAL SUSPENSION, BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/2, MEASURE 78

The bagatelle does not reach this theoretic atemporality until the final articulation of m. 78. Before this second G_3 of the bar, no one tone (in pitch-space) repeats within the arpeggiated chord, although all articulated pitches, through the use of the pedal, sustain for the entire measure. While the progressive introduction of additional tones to the sustained harmony mitigates the measure's timelessness, the final attack of the bar is the first twice-sounded tone within the sonority. With this second attack, the time flow of the music instanta-

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neously suspends. This atemporality lasts but a third of a quarter note, for at the start of m. 79 the harmony changes, the pedal releases, and the music renews its forward propulsion.

While one does not perceive this temporal suspension as the music acoustically unfolds, the passage in question does imply a momentary landing on atemporality when contextualizing the held sonority with its immediately preceding and following material. Measure 78's abrupt harmonic shift to G major, its emphatic measure-long pedal, its half-note B♮ in the soprano position, and the cadential flavor of the end of m. 77 conspire to fortify the sensation that the bar inaugurates a new beginning. These characteristics likewise imply the presence of an invisible fermata floating above the sustaining sonority. While this fermata is not notated, and while the music does not come to a full stop until passing through the subdominant–tonic motion of mm. 79–81, the twist the above-observed qualities give the measure and the relatively perfunctory aspect of the immediately following cadence create the desire for both a brief reflection on the preceding material and preparation for the music yet to come. That the music does not actually stop in m. 78 negates no such implications of the bar.

This cessation of movement differs from the earlier moments evoking temporal suspension (cf. mm. 42–49; Example 3.6), for those earlier passages abruptly and concretely halted music then in motion. Conversely, the hypothetical suspension of m. 78 immediately follows a cadence that effectively closes the preceding passage and prophesies a new beginning. While the earlier rests appear in the midst of the fray, the suspension of the G-major triad stands alone. Hypothetically, the preceding action already has stopped, and the forthcoming action is yet to begin. The interruptive quality of m. 78 is not as powerfully dramatic as the earlier interruptions; rather, it is reflectively pensive.

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The pedal release at the start of m. 79 lets go the sustained harmony of the previous bar, allows the music to move, and conceptually reactivates time. Measure 79 hints at resuming the triplet motion of mm. 74–77, but rather than continue, the passage quickly moves to a business-like plagal cadence. In m. 79, G-minor returns as the the tonic with the subdominant C-minor triad, as B♭, not B♮, appears in m. 82. Following this complete return to the home tonality, the music cadences three times in G minor (mm. 85, 87, and 89), and in its octave transpositions, its three presentations, and its overtly mechanical nature, this closing relates to the final measures of Bagatelle 1 (see Example 1.23).[3] After repeating mm. 27–88, the bagatelle ends; see Example 3.12.

EXAMPLE 3.12: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/2, MEASURES 78–*FINE*

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TRUNCATION AND JUXTAPOSITION
OPUS 126/2, 4

Opus 126/2 suggests the joint presence of improvisation and controlled compositional activity. Although certain moments of the bagatelle seem to imply a spontaneous origin, Beethoven invariably restrains these by keeping them within determined temporal boundaries. In the composition, improvisation is never open-ended but is allowed to span only brief spaces of time. Brevity does not enable limitless improvisatory freedom in the bagatelle; rather, brevity forces suppression of protracted and uncompromised exploration. In Op. 126/2, creative freedom sparked by brevity yields no automatic transcription of the musical *Einfälle*, but one encouraging and benefiting from careful contemplation.

Beethoven maintains creative control, particularly with regard to formal design, when centralizing brevity. Distinguished from unbounded improvisation, brevity can allow a composer to have a more commanding presence within the final musical representation than when transcribing uncompromised and unbounded improvisation. As suggested earlier, one way to measure the extent that the improvisation engages spontaneity is to ascertain the degree to which the performer loosens his or her conscious creative authority and allows the most immediate artistic impulses to take the music where they may: such an ideal improvisation suppresses in its immediacy the explicit artistic directive of the performer/composer. Contrary to this, brevity does not quell the composer's authoritative presence but fosters it. By allowing—indeed, requiring—that the composer shun both apriori influence and unmitigated, open-ended improvisational transcription, brevity brings the composer's unique creative will ever to the fore and enables the creative impetus to be more exclusively his or her own. In Op. 126/2, such conscious creative activity manifests itself partly through the determined acts of diminution and truncation.

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Conscious creative authority is formally evident in Op. 126/2. Were improvisation the primary creative dictate, the resulting work likely would tend toward the through-composed and self-generated (insofar as the hypothetical improvisation is unfettered by outside influence), which the second bagatelle indeed does. However, Beethoven controls the design of Op. 126/2 by entirely submitting to no improvisational formal impulses despite the perhaps-spontaneous genesis of the primary bagatelle-material. While improvisation may have originated many ideas within the work and is evoked by the score, the discrete ideas within Op. 126/2 have been modified to fit a brief overall time frame. If the material of the bagatelle was born of improvisation, Beethoven nonetheless truncates that material and exposes his composerly presence.

And so returns the notion of juxtaposition. As this music engages (1) a composite formal design resulting from alert attention to brevity, (2) more than one principal idea (and multiple fragments of those ideas), and (3) carefully positioned brief contiguous units, juxtaposition plays a role central to the formal identity of the composition. This juxtaposition is a temporal quality, with both the internal structures of each constituent unit and the moments when the music shifts from one idea to another together giving shape to the linear unfolding of the work. If desired, the composer may expose the seams between the discrete segments of the music not only by truncation, but also by increasing the individuality of each idea and leaving rough the junction of the two. Thus is Op. 126/2, its joints deliberately exposed and emphasizing the formal counterpoint of its discrete musical ideas.

With the seams between its brief segments placed in such relief and with such propinquity, the overall contour of the bagatelle sharply emerges. As brief spans separate its different ideas and its changes of mood, syntax, and perceived direction, an awareness of temporal duration comes forth as a principal

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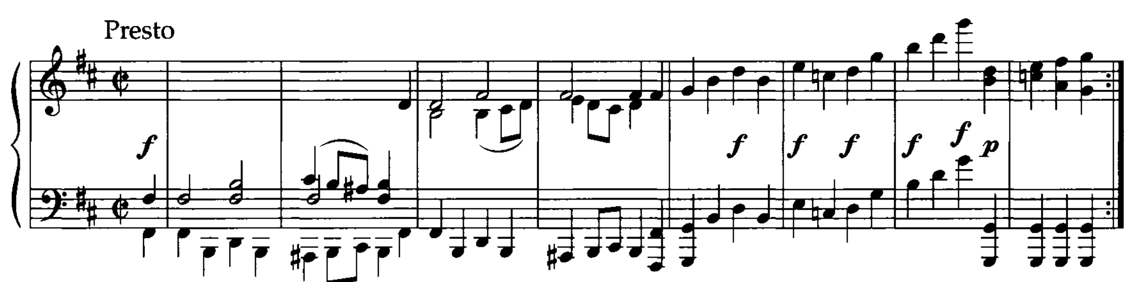
musical feature. The finished bagatelle seems to centrally engage its underlying *Einfälle*, but Beethoven manipulates those revelations and does not make them, in their immediate guises, the principal *raisons d'être* of the work. Instead, it is the suggested examination, fragmentation, and truncation of those *Einfälle* that most characterize the composition.

The fourth bagatelle of Op. 126 iterates many of these qualities. Although the composition spans 216 measures, more than any bagatelle of the opus, and may not seem a notable embodiment of brevity, the internal make-up of the bagatelle does use the compositional techniques of truncation and juxtaposition of radically divergent material. These related techniques, truncation and juxtaposition, receive much of their identities from brevity.

Like the second bagatelle, the fourth comprises recognizably discrete segments. The first, structured about Idea A, opens the composition. With its *forte* dynamic, driving rhythmic momentum, B-minor tonality, and dynamically indicated points of accent, Idea A has a heavy and determined character: Beethoven could have marked it *risoluto*; see Example 3.13.



EXAMPLE 3.13: IDEA A, BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/4, MEASURES 1–8

Idea B begins in the second half of m. 12. Its opening *piano* crescendoing to *forte*, initial key of C major (mm. 13–16) modulating to G major (mm. 17–20),

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moto perpetuo, and harmonic movement between tonic and dominant sonorities contrast Idea B with Idea A; see Example 3.14.

EXAMPLE 3.14: IDEA B, BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/4, MEASURES 9–21

On the fourth quarter note of m. 20, a brief fragment taken from the opening of Idea A interrupts Idea B. Considered strictly in its theoretic aspect, this reversion to earlier-used material seems not necessarily to interrupt its preceding passage, as the reiteration of material drawn from Idea A follows the tonal completion of a second four-bar phrase within Idea B (mm. 17–20); additionally, the new music does not interpose itself within an ongoing segment of Idea B. Nevertheless, the immediate departure from the rhythmically fluid character of Idea B stresses the interruptive quality of this return of Idea A. As well, rests following the two *fortissimo* F♯ attacks (mm. 20–21) reinforce the rupture-

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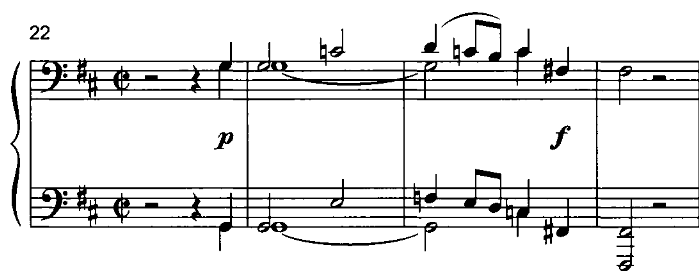
quality of the octave-F♯s. As Idea B has perpetual motion, it contains no obligatory or rhythmically reinforced moment for cessation, and when the octave-F♯s appear, they break into an ongoing steady rhythmic stream.

The opening two-measure cell grounding Idea A immediately follows the interruption at mm. 20–21, but this presentation of Idea A is in C major, a move to the Neapolitan region. As well, the *piano* dynamic of the two bars extracted from Idea A (mm. 22–24) contrasts the *forte* of the Idea's initial presentation. The octave-F♯s that forcibly stop Idea B in mm. 20–21 return and interrupt this brief C-major statement; see Example 3.15.



EXAMPLE 3.15: MODIFIED RETURN AND INTERRUPTION OF THE BEGINNING OF IDEA A, BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/4, MEASURES 22–25

The first two octave-F♯s (mm. 20–21) seem initial pitches of a forthcoming return to the B-minor form of Idea A. However, the extended silence following the octave-F♯s breaks the promise of such a return. This silence, which recalls those in the second bagatelle (cf. Example 3.6), precedes the *piano* statement of the first two measures of Idea A (mm. 24–25). As the following octave-F♯s appear after only half of the C-major Idea A sounds, it seems the motive itself slips off track temporally, dynamically, and tonally in mm. 22–24 and that the emphatic F♯s (mm. 24–25) demand an immediate return to the initial B-minor form of Idea A just as they silence Idea B and return Idea A moments earlier

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(mm. 20–21). Only eight quarter notes must suffice for this truncated C-major iteration of Idea A, and the F♯ reappearance successfully brings the Idea to assume a minor-key form once again (mm. 26–39). Beethoven then works Idea A back to its original B-minor guise, which is reached at m. 39; see Example 3.16.

EXAMPLE 3.16: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/4, MEASURES 26–51

The repeated F♯s (mm. 20–21, 24–25) thus seem fragmentary, as if the beginning of Idea A has been excised from its larger context and scored alone. The octave-F♯s are not within the C-major statement of Idea A (mm. 22–24), as the Neapolitan presentation starts at the beginning of the motive rather than

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where the octave-F♯s leave off. These pitches do refer to the opening measures of the bagatelle and B minor, but their reference does not compromise the effect of rupture; on the contrary, it reinforces the intrusive quality of the F♯s by the overt departure from the ongoing gesture-presentation and by its status as but a portion of that presentation. The F♯s fragment the music and are fragments themselves, and both characteristics suggest rupture. Neither pair of F♯s moves directly to a full statement of Idea A; nor do they have any extraneously added material. The F♯s encompass their own acoustic space. They fall along the time-line of the composition, but they disrupt any would-be seamless transfer from event to event.

Important in this concern are the rhythms of the two octave-gestures and the protracted silences that follow. In the rupture-moments of mm. 21–22 and mm. 24–25, Beethoven distills the rhythm to a simple pairing of one short and one long articulation, and the silence following the two attacks positions the octaves in relief and at greater distance from surrounding material. Yet, the temporal space the rests fill is equal in length to what would have been the remainder of the two-measure gesture if the octave-F♯s had inaugurated one; it is as if a veil of silence enshrouds this remaining time. Like the silences in Op. 126/2, this silence is motivic, functioning as an essential portion of a composite gesture that includes the octave-F♯s as it helps isolate the F♯s and give them material independence. The brief octave-F♯s represent a complete two-bar gesture; they bear not only their own weight but also that of the missing portion of the implied phrase. Consequently, the F♯s are both complete and unfinished: as markedly brief representations of lengthier, earlier-heard gestures, they are fragmentary, and by assuming the density of the two complete measures, they are whole, referring beyond themselves as the most concentrated forms of their implied complete gestures.

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Idea C, the final principal component of Op. 126/4, begins on the pickup to m. 52. The key changes from B minor to its parallel major, the dynamic becomes *piano*, and for sixteen measures a lower-stave drone harmonizes the right hand. Against this static accompaniment, the top-stave melody, with a figuration common to stringed instruments, falls into a standard grouping of two eight-bar phrases divided into four-measure pairs. Although tonally derived, these phrases do not progress; instead, they sound above the droning pedal point in the left hand. A lengthy crescendo (mm. 60–67) emphasizes the unmoving harmony of these groupings, and after crescendoing, the music diminuendos to *pianissimo* (m. 68).

Measures 68–71 rupture the temporally protracted but harmonically diminished Idea C. *Pianissimo* whole-note octaves first fill the lower stave (mm. 68 and 69), a second pitch-class joins this lower-stave octave (m. 70), and a three-pitch chord follows in the right hand (m. 71). This final sonority dovetails with the return of Idea C at the end of the measure; see Example 3.17.

EXAMPLE 3.17: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/4, MEASURES 52–71

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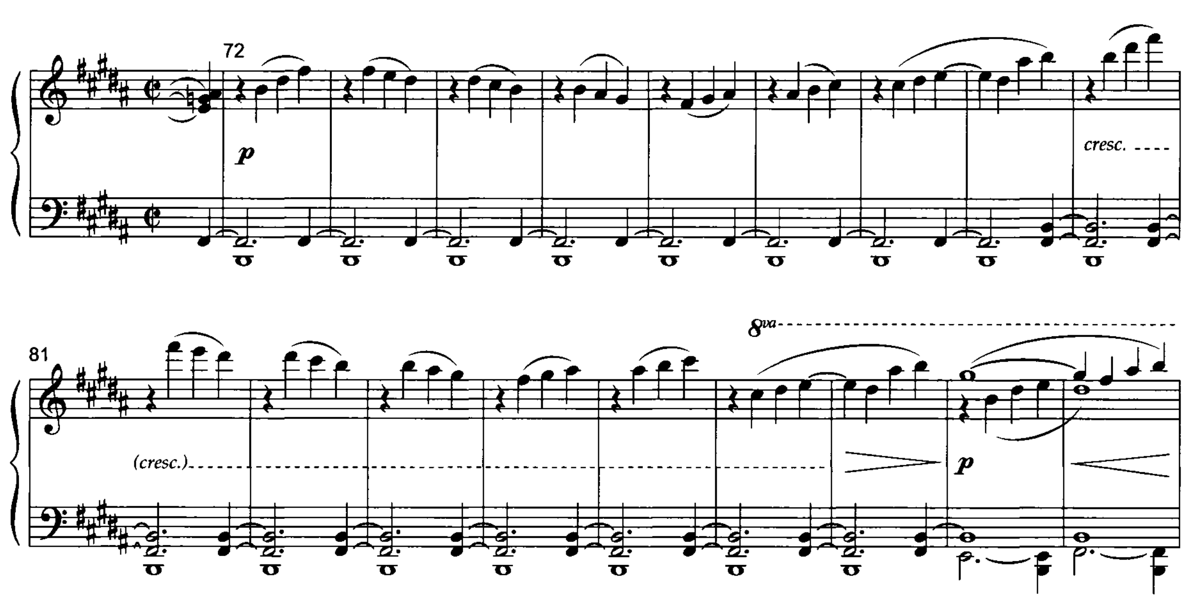
At mm. 72–87, Idea C returns by repeating mm. 52–67. At the spot analogous to the rupture at mm. 68–71, the left-hand drone moves for the first time to the subdominant and alternates between IV and I (mm. 88–91). Following this, the $\hat{5}$–$\hat{1}$ lower-stave drone returns to again accompany a top-stave monophonic melody. However, this tune does not meander quite as nonprogressively as before but instead alternates between two bars of tonic and two bars of dominant harmonies (mm. 92–93, 94–95, 96–97, 98–99).

No new four-bar segment begins at m. 100; instead, the two-bar subphrase that begins at m. 98 extends. Measure 100 exactly repeats m. 98, with its right hand suggesting V^7 set against a droning left hand. A dramatic pause (m. 101) follows the measure, and at the anacrusis to m. 102 material similar to that of mm. 92–99 returns. The right-hand changes of harmony occur more rapidly in these last measures, with V suggested in m. 102, V^7 in m. 103, and V–I in m. 104. Measure 105 contains a coda-like tonic harmony, and at the anacrusis to m. 106, the key reverts to the parallel minor and Idea A comes back; see Example 3.18.



EXAMPLE 3.18: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/4, MEASURES 72–107

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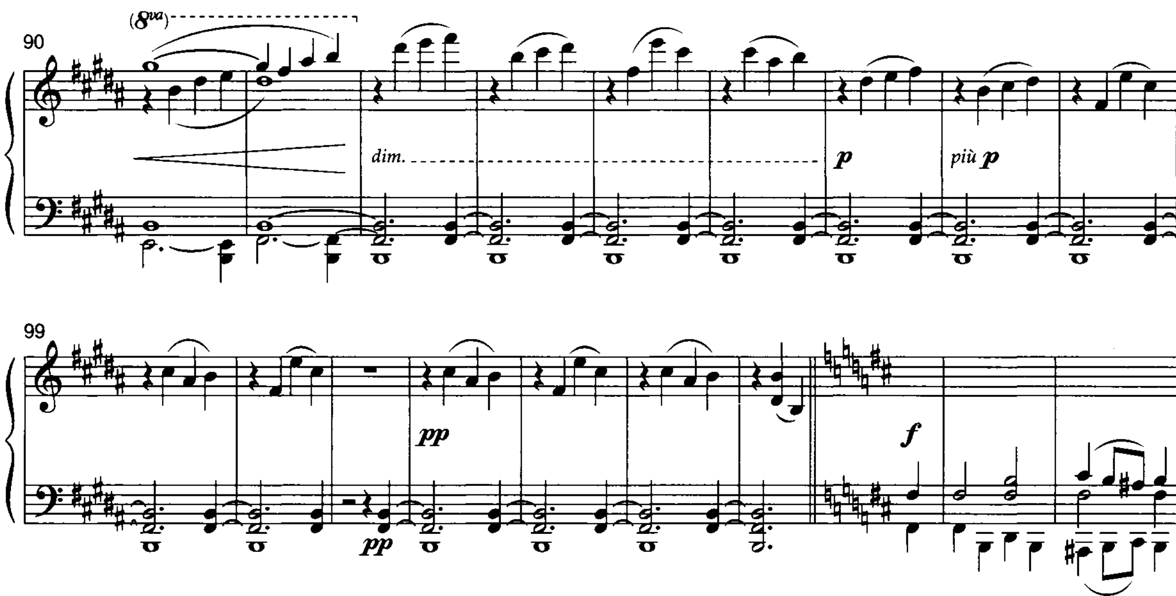
EXAMPLE 3.18. *continued.*



Beethoven thus ruptures Idea C twice—once by spareness (mm. 68–71) and once by silence (m. 101). He also bookends Idea C with the seemingly opposite material of Idea A: Idea A is driving and motoric, but Idea C is placid and nonpropulsive; Idea A progresses harmonically, but Idea C begins with no harmonic motion, oscillates between IV and I and V and I, and finally consolidates dominant and tonic sonorities within the same bar; the essential dynamic of Idea A is *forte*, whereas that of Idea C is *piano*; and the two Ideas are in parallel major and minor keys.

The remainder of the composition repeats previous material. Ruptures at mm. 125–26 and 129–30 resemble those in mm. 20–21 and 24–25; Idea C fractures at mm. 179–82 (as mm. 68–71); and at m. 212 three silent quarter notes interrupt the close of Idea C (as m. 101). The only rupture unique to this second half of the bagatelle occurs at m. 161, where the protracted closing half of Idea A (mm. 149–60) stops *in medias res* and yields a seven-quarter-note silence. At the anacrusis to m. 163, Idea C follows this silence; see Example 3.19.

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EXAMPLE 3.19: BEETHOVEN, OPUS 126/4, MEASURES 145–66

This final interruption relates to the earlier immediate transition from Idea A to Idea C (m. 51), although the prior change does not involve as forceful a rupture as the one at mm. 161–62. While the earlier transition follows a tonally syntactic cadence, this cadence is averted the second time, as the music continues by immediately moving to the octave-arpeggiation/dynamically accented material and hinting at starting a repetition of the full passage (mm. 157–60 match mm. 149–52). By rebeginning Idea A at its original stopping point, Beethoven prepares the dramatic truncation-rupture at m. 161; the lengthy silence highlights this fragmentation and refers the listener once again to the central use of brevity that is born of truncation and fragmentation.

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Beethoven juxtaposes discrete material throughout the second and fourth bagatelles of Op. 126. By regularly effecting rupture and by flanking those ruptures with particularly divergent material, he focuses ever more sharply the moments of juxtaposition and causes brevity to contribute profoundly to all formal aspects of the work. The composition embodies a self-generated and individualized formal design that, while alluding to tonal schemes, ultimately is unbeholden to the letter of those dictates, and brevity is significantly responsible for encouraging such a particular formalization. Necessarily governed by brevity, the interruptions and juxtapositions in the second and fourth bagatelles of Op. 126 help yield music with an especially liberated and uniquely self-referential formal aesthetic.

NOTES

1. "Künstlerische Formen sind Gestalten und Gestaltsysteme, in denen Geistiges zur Erscheinung gelangt und faßbar wird. Wir haben deshalb immer wieder erneut zu fragen nach dem Verhältnis von Gestaltschema und poetischer Substanz."

2. This differs from the shift from a G-minor triad to a G-major triad in the opening segment of the bagatelle (m. 4; see Example 3.2), for the earlier example does not tonicize the G-major triad but instead gives it a V/iv harmonic identity. The B♭–B♮ pitch-shift in m. 78 momentarily makes a change to the parallel major, much like a Picardy cadential gesture.

3. Such cadential relation helps establish theoretic linkage between the two bagatelles in a manner akin to the anacrusis similarities the works share. However, these commonalities do not soften the formal individuality of each bagatelle. The anacrusis similarity is motivic and not explicitly formal, and the idea of using codetta-like cadential tags, while shared by both compositions, is merely a standard means of closing each work. This study primarily addresses form in an overall, composite sense, and although different bagatelles share a few elemental theoretic details, the assessment of each form as unique is valid.

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CHAPTER FOUR
WEBERN, OPUS 9

> For us, it was an advance that *had* to be made, an advance like never before. In each work, we must reach new places: Every work is something different, something new (48).
>
> —Anton Webern, *Der Weg zur Komposition in zwölf Tönen*

EMANCIPATION, LYRICISM, AND HYPER-ROMANTICISM
OPUS 9/2

In July 1909, after receiving a copy of Schoenberg's *Drei Klavierstücke,* Op. 11, pianist and composer Ferruccio Busoni was concerned. He wrote Schoenberg, "I believe I have grasped your intentions [in the work] and feel confident...to produce sonorities and atmospheres according to your expectations. But the task is hindered by their excessive *conciseness*" (Busoni, 384). After Schoenberg replied that he stood by his original manuscript, Busoni wrote that he nonetheless had rescored the work. To Schoenberg, this was unacceptable, and in an undated letter to Busoni, he again defended his original version of Op. 11:

> I strive for: complete liberation from all forms
> from all symbols
> of cohesion and
> of logic.

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Thus:

away with 'motivic working out'.

Away with harmony as

cement or bricks of a building.

. . . .

Away with protracted ten-ton scores, from erected or constructed

towers, rocks and other massive claptrap.

My music must be

brief.

Concise! In two notes: not built, but 'expressed'!! (389)

Webern also believed that abandoning tonality necessarily engenders brief absolute music. Lecturing on February 26, 1932, he commented,

> All the works created between the disappearance of tonality and the formulation of the new twelve-note law were short *[kurz]*, surprisingly short. The longer works written at the time were linked with a text which "carried" them (Schoenberg's *Erwartung* and *Die glückliche Hand*, Berg's *Wozzeck*), that's to say, with something extra-musical. With the abandoning of tonality the most important means of building up longer pieces was lost. For tonality was supremely important in producing self-contained forms. As if the light had been put out!—that's how it seemed. (At least this is how it strikes us now.) At the time everything was in a state of flux—uncertain, dark, very stimulating and exciting, so that there wasn't time to notice the loss. Only when Schoenberg gave expression to the law were larger forms possible (Webern 1963, 53–54).[1]

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Webern and Schoenberg realized that the emancipation of dissonance forcibly altered their creative processes. A composer committed to a non-tonal perspective no longer could build a composition either through "motivic working out" or by using preestablished triadic harmony. If the composer chooses not to transfer architectural control to a textual directive, he or she must fumble in the uncertain, yet stimulating, darkness of which Webern speaks. The missing light, that of received musical law and preestablished tonal methodology, left Webern no creative alternative but to illuminate his own pathway.

"[T]o what extent do you realize [your creative] intentions [in Op. 11]?" Busoni asked Schoenberg after receiving the composer's defense of brevity. "[H]ow much is *instinctive,* how much is *'deliberate'*?" (390). Replying on August 24, 1909, Schoenberg again implores his friend to trust Op. 11 and to alter nothing of its original aspect. "I fear that a transcription," Schoenberg writes,

> ...would either
> *introduce* what I avoid, either fundamentally or according to my preferences;
> *add* what I myself—within the limits of my personality—would never have devised, thus what is foreign or unattainable to me;
> *omit* what I would find necessary, or
> *improve* where I am, and must remain, imperfect.
> Thus a transcription would be bound to do me violence: whether it helps or hinders my work (393–94).

Schoenberg demands absolute artistic authority over his music. No outside mediators may bear any influence upon the creative process or the finished composition. He prefers maintaining the unique and "*interesting idea,* which has

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not been quite successfully carried out, [to replacing it] with a '*reliable*' sonority" (395). Schoenberg values more highly the creative freedom he discovers when discarding tonal compositional mediators than the possibility of composing music that performers and listeners might comprehend and aesthetically appreciate more readily. Throughout his emancipated music, Schoenberg desires to express his creative ideas with scant, if any, foreign encroachment. He explicitly says as much toward the close of his August 24 letter:

> I would like to achieve even greater variegation of motifs and figures without melodic character; I would like to be freer and less constrained in rhythm and time-signature; freer from repetition of motifs and spinning out of thoughts in the manner of a melody. This is my vision: this is how I imagine music before I notate=transcribe it. And I am unable to force this upon myself; I must wait until a piece comes out of its own accord in the way I have envisaged (395).

Schoenberg's conclusion desires ever freer musical creation, and he emphasizes this desire by referring to what might be understood as a wish to preserve the *Einfälle* underlying a given work. He continues,

> My only intention is
>
> to have *no* intentions!
>
> No formal, architectural, or other artistic intentions (except perhaps of capturing the mood of a poem), no aesthetic intentions—none of any kind; at most this:
>
> to place nothing inhibiting in the stream of my unconscious sensations (396).

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Adorno believes such *Einfall*-liberation links to the way "Schoenberg's free atonality...expanded the expressive powers of music to an unprecedented degree....Casting all its preexisting forms to one side, music became direct expression" (1999, 93). Adorno notes the simultaneous occurrences of the dismissal of tonality, the recognition of and adherence to the uncompromised lead of the *Einfälle*, and the attendant reduction in time of a finished work:

> With the disappearance of tonality and its chordal, modulatory, metrical, and formal symmetries, together with the ban on repetition that composers felt was necessary, they could not but make their compositions shorter. Intensified expression coincided with a taboo on extension in time. The need to conquer time was inseparable from the fear that extension and development through time would jeopardize the purity of the expressive moment (1999, 93–94).

Composers of the Second Viennese School strove to preserve the purity of the expressive moment. *Purity:* interior, self-contained, uncompromised, personal. *Expressive moment:* creative reflection, aesthetic orientation, artistic response. To transcribe, as a musical *Idee*, the undiluted essence of the *Einfall*, which is deeply idiosyncratic and unique in all possible aspects, is an important goal of emancipated composition. Webern eagerly accepted and engaged such a program, and as he did he wholeheartedly embraced an attendant diminution of musical time.

Emancipated music adheres to no preordained compositional system. Neither tonal nor dodecaphonic, such work provides its own theoretic and syntactic bases and the logic underlying its identity. Any peculiarities within such a

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work are of the work alone; any systematization of the emancipated musical material is unique to the liberated music at hand.

Brevity, by allowing new music to disregard apriori forms and orientations, helps Webern maintain the purity of the expressive moments within his bagatelles and brings his creative will closer to the surface. Yet, the resulting "inwardly collected expressivity *[innen gestaute Expressivität]*" (Zenck, 193) nevertheless maintains connection between Webern's work and that of his compositional forebears. While temporal reduction immediately and importantly affects how Webern conceives and arranges the most rudimentary parameters of his music, diminution alone effects no split between his emancipated work and its tonal predecessors; rather, Webern's non-tonal orientation is part of the same historical development to which Beethoven's examinations of brevity belong. Martin Zenck notes as much when he comments, "The extreme formal intensity set down in [Webern's] work between Op. 5 and Op. 11 picked up where Beethoven had left off in his late Bagatelles and in the *Diabelli* Variations: at the point of development where thematic compression overtook the dissolving and crumbling motivic forms" (193).[2]

Webern's emancipated music is no less Romantic than Beethoven's Op. 126 or Chopin's Op. 28. Quite the opposite: The Webern compositions seem more expressive, more deeply personal, more multifarious and dense, more Romantic than either the Beethoven bagatelles or the Chopin preludes. Second Viennese School composers did not dismiss the nineteenth-century creative orientation along with tonality; rather, they enhanced critical aspects of Romanticism in their new music. As Charles Rosen explains, "[The] miniatures of Webern, Berg, and Schoenberg do not diminish the emotions they express but enlarge them, as if fragments of feeling were blown up by a powerful microscope" (1975, 53). The emancipated music of the Second Viennese School, and of Webern in particular, suggests a hyper-Romantic compositional orientation.

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Members of the Second Viennese School frequently claim connection with their musical heritage. In Webern's work, the influence of Romanticism appears partly as a lyrical "attempt to resolve all musical materiality, all the objective elements of musical form, into the pure sonority of the subject, without an alien remainder that refuses to be assimilated" (Adorno 1999, 92–93). Recalling that the first non-tonal works of the School use poetic text and that Webern composed two cycles of Lieder (Opp. 3 and 4) prior to his first instrumental Expressionist composition (Op. 5), Adorno believes Webern's lyricism transfers from his Lieder to his subsequent instrumental work.[3]

Webern may drop overt use of a poetic text because text-based music cannot transcend its received "objective *concept* that...can never be translated into pure expression" (1999, 93). This notion holds even if the poem has no palpable meaning, for if poetry makes its principal reason nothing beyond abstract "sound and image, it transforms itself into a more impoverished, gray, two-dimensional music" (Adorno 1999, 93) and, despite its impoverished meaning, would impress a particular temporal apriori upon any music with the text at its foundation. Any foreign creative dictate influences a resulting musical creation, and, as well as injecting an "alien remainder," such an influence often overrides the aesthetic push toward ever more brevity.

The emancipated program of wholly discarding apriori outside influence made it virtually compulsory for Webern to eschew text-based composition, and his central works of this period, Opp. 5–11, were instrumental (the two Rainer Maria Rilke settings for voice and chamber ensemble, Op. 8, notwithstanding). Yet, although he realized this imperative push toward absolute music early in his career, Webern continued to favor lyricism throughout his music, with the lyrical impulse manifesting itself as the recurring desire to make a score expressive. "Webern's 'lyrical nature *[lyrische Natur]*' is not understood in the narrow

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sense *[Sinn]* of the idea of song or extramusical connotation," writes Friedhelm Döhl, "but as present in all aspects—that is, as a true increase of inner expression *[inneren Ausdruck]* in purely musical parameters" (153).[4] Such an expressive lyrical impulse governs all aspects of Webern's non-tonal instrumental music and spurs each parameter to offer a unique contribution to the enunciation of this inner expression.

After dismissing the notion of setting a poetic text and repudiating tonal syntax, Webern found it difficult to fit his work within any uncompromised predetermined form. Zenck notes this when suggesting that Webern's overarching creative challenge was not only "how to integrate the vocal impulse within an instrumental composition…, but it also concerned giving the instrumental composition an internally cohesive shape, in terms of both form and content, as formerly had been provided by a text" (198).[5] Absolute music alone needed to furnish the qualities that a poetic text formerly provided, for the absence of either solid architectural form or meaningful content was as incompatible with Webern's lyrical impulse as any directive other than his own. Facing this unlit aesthetic region, Webern responded with "a music so thoroughly formed in each tone, [that] each is indispensable *[Weberns Musik ist so durchgebildet in jedem Ton, jeder ist so notwendig]*" (Adorno 1963a, 135). As a result, Webern's music leaned toward a pronounced brevity in its initial and most tentative representations.

Webern believed that every gesture, in all aspects and regardless how succinct, is vitally important to the total creation. Adorno writes that the essential brevity of every Webernian musical parameter, a brevity which he labels as "Webern's musical minimalism," naturally results from such a density-increase and is "founded on the expressive requirement that excludes any independent phenomenon that is not at the same time expressive" (1999, 104). Believing that distillation implies diminution, Adorno writes, "The formal law presiding over [Webern's] composing, in all its stages, is that of shrinkage" (1999, 94).

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Some have linked Webern's movement toward temporal diminution, his transfer of lyricism from vocal to instrumental music, and his emancipation of music from tonal syntactic law to a tendency toward loosening his hold on the exact state of the resulting work and allowing each *Einfall* to reveal itself in all its individuality and immediacy. Döhl writes, "Resulting from Webern's lyrical meditation [when composing a purely instrumental work] was the notion that with each act of reductive writing, the compressed forms revealed an increased intensity of expression as well as a reduction of conscious formal control" (153).[6] Yet, such a thought expresses only part of the motivation underlying Webern's decision to trust his initial musical inspirations with little compromise. Not only did maintaining the lyrical impulse within instrumental music compel Webern toward less-conscious formal control, but a network of influences, including those encouraged by the lyrical impulse and non-tonal syntax, also impressed upon his creative sensibilities the need to suppress absolute authority over musical form. These discrete motivations may be understood *en bloc* as the qualities defining a hyper-Romantic creative practice that ultimately caused every unique *Einfall* to be its own principal artistic guide. Only an unfettered mind could receive so uncontaminated a moment of disclosure; as Alfred Koerppen observes, "Creative revelation is not a product of labor; it comes through the loosening of borders to allow light *[Der Einfall ist aber auch dann nicht Produkt der Arbeit, er kommt durch die Lockerung des Terrains eher zutage]*" (378). *Einfälle* themselves lit the darkness that surrounded Webern as an emancipated composer.

One may discern such hyper-Romanticism throughout Webern, Op. 9. The second bagatelle of the opus is one place to look; see Example 4.1. Starting with a series of uniquely defined gestures, Op. 9/2 is hyper-Romantic in both its composite score and its constituent material. For example, while the opening gesture comprises only three eighth notes, it is a compound of discrete qualities,

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EXAMPLE 4.1: WEBERN, OPUS 9/2

each of which increases the lyrical expressivity of the line: a diminuendo from *mezzo-forte* to *piano*, a tenuto on the third and final pitch of the gesture, a direction to bow *am Griffbrett [sul tasto]*, and a sequence of three pitches that, when

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understood together, compose the pitch-class set (015), which is neither a vertical nor horizontal structure that explicitly works in the conventional tonal sense. Alone, the gesture connotes no consonance or dissonance and implies no forthcoming continuation or elaboration. The passage abstractly seems a stand-alone, self-contained, integral idea, and Webern fortifies this semblance by isolating the gesture from any surrounding sound.

The next two gestures of the composition share with the opening idea this stand-alone, affective quality. The viola is first to follow the initial gesture, and it sounds the initial eighth note of a triplet before resting on the two remaining divisions of the beat (♪ 𝄾 𝄾). The dynamic level is *forte*, and a stopped harmonic modifies the viola's timbre. Similar to the earlier violin 2, the rhythm of the viola-gesture allows silence between the end of its only note and the attack of the forthcoming violoncello.

As the preceding viola, the violoncello gesture contains a single tone. However, unlike the preceding material, silence does not follow this violoncello idea before another instrument enters. The immediately following violin 1, sounding the third eighth note of a triplet (𝄾 𝄾 ♪), overlaps the held violoncello note. A tenuto above the violoncello articulation supports this harmonic overlap and softens the potential disconnect between the violoncello and violin 1.

The violin 1 sustains its pitch until the end of m. 1, and the violin 2 bows a new tone on the final quarter note of the measure. The viola next joins the evolving harmony, and when considering the violin 1 and the viola grouped together, the pitch-class set (015) returns. This unit, while not tonal, relates to the way a tonal composition iterates common sonorities throughout its span. The pitch-class set (015) crops up now and again during the brief space of Op. 9/2, and although it is not a "tonic" harmony, it does provide the bagatelle with a sort of harmonic commonality that strengthens logical continuity within

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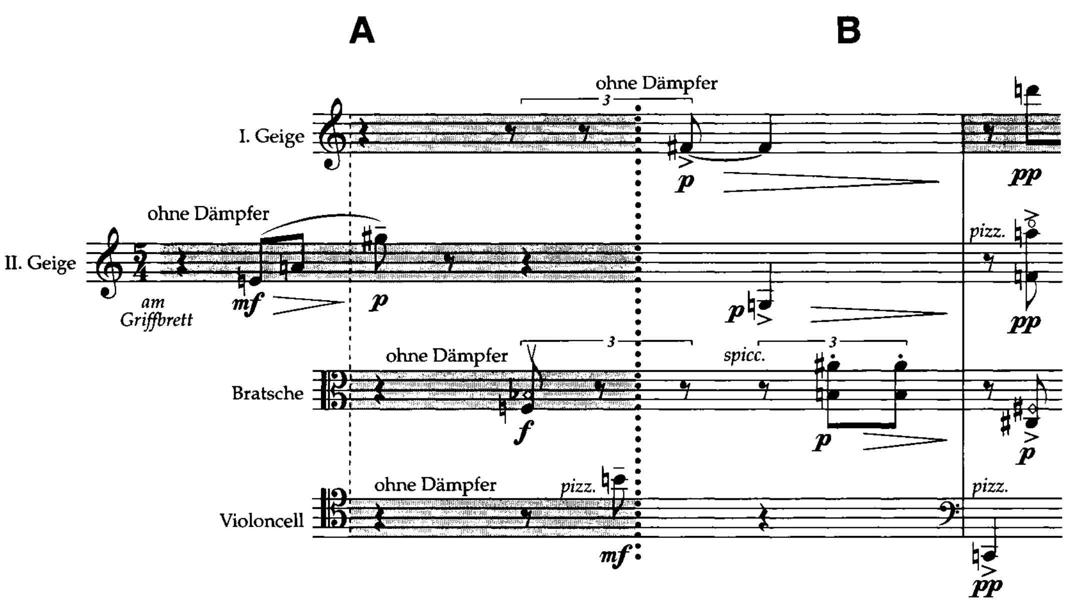
the work. Similarly, the pitch-class set (0145) fortifies unity in the bagatelle, as does the recurrent sounding of major-seventh intervals.

The three-instrument sonic alignment of the two violins and the viola ceases at the end of the first bar, where the violoncello plucks its lowest string, open, on the first quarter note of m. 2. The violin 2 and viola harmonize with the violoncello on the second eighth note of the bar where the violin 2 plays a pizzicato double-stop and the viola bows a stopped harmonic. A new series of spiccato eighth notes in the violin 1 effects a new beginning that dovetails with these violin 2 and viola articulations, and a subsequent repeated major second in the viola and violoncello, {D_5, E_5}, reinforces the formal division within m. 2.

Thus apprehended, the first six quarter notes contain two discrete segments, as seen in Example 4.2. The first segment, A, comprises three unique units of one instrument each, and the second segment, B, comprises two units, each of which contains a composite verticality sounded by three instruments.



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EXAMPLE 4.2: SECTION ONE DIVIDED INTO TWO SMALLER SEGMENTS, WEBERN, OPUS 9/2, MEASURES 1–2

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Segment A emphasizes instrumental individuality, whereas in Segment B the instruments sound simultaneously and use similar articulations and dynamics. The three units within Segment A are separate, while the internal make-up of each half of Segment B is blended. The different creative approaches of the Segments emphasize the difference between the two portions of Section One and vary the complete six-quarter-note division on yet another plane while, by contrast, the (015) pitch-class set common to both Segments helps them homogenize. Along with aggregate completion, multilayered heterogeneity is central to the creative concept, and such a focus helps ally the bagatelle with Schlegel's Romantic imperative.

As noted in Chapter Three, Schlegel largely concerns his Romantic imperative with genre and envisions an "'absolute' *Roman* [that] would...bring together, in a marvelous unity, all the disparate tendencies and types that had previously been kept separate" (Daverio, 127). Schlegel's "call to overcome the strictures of generic boundaries" (128) challenges artists to engage "generic fusion" (137) in their work. Yet, Schlegel did not intend for the artist to muddle distinct generic qualities in a given creation to the degree that the genres themselves lose their identities. Daverio quotes Schlegel's *Fragmente zur Litteratur und Poesie* when noting this danger: "When ALL the constituent parts of a Romantic poem are fused ('verschmolzen'), then it simply ceases to be romantic" (Daverio, 137). Schlegel does not want the poet to distort the identities of the generic forms used within a Romantic work; rather, he urges the artist to maintain the selected generic identities when blending them into a *Mischgedicht*. The poet should sustain generic difference in the Romantic work while transcending those genres within a "radically individualized *unica*" (Daverio, 144).

Fusing many discrete and seemingly self-contained musical ideas within an overall unique structure and subsequently rejecting tonal principles and their

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attendant apriori formal designs, Webern intensifies certain aspects of Schlegel's idea. In particular, the notion of a dramatically unique and unified composite form holds true in Webern's music. Each of his early instrumental non-tonal works is exceptionally individualized, and each nevertheless maintains the essences of apriori creative strategies, albeit in the most primary of musical parameters and the most diminished of formal divisions. In the second bagatelle, a theme or motive, two concepts central to tonal music, might appear as a three-note ascending line, as a progressively building harmony, or even as a well defined, isolated tone. Yet, although Webern distills such received foundational elements to intensely succinct gestures, the individual moments of the composition do not mix in an indiscriminate hodgepodge; rather, distillation heightens difference among the constituent gestures of his bagatelle.

As in Beethoven's and Chopin's compositions, Webern brings the *Einfälle* underlying his bagatelles to the surface. However, he neither manipulates his initial ideas as Chopin manipulates those grounding certain preludes nor develops them as Beethoven develops those founding certain bagatelles. In Op. 9, Webern instead presents many of his *Einfälle* in what seem to be as unadulterated a manner as possible without transgressing the traditional means of musical notation. Such distillation allows a given *Einfall* to stand more immediately in its initially revealed state, and this process of concentration aligns with and affects the *Idee* underpinning Schlegel's Romantic imperative—that is, Webern even distills the Schlegelian idea that the novel should embody generic mixture and should transcend those generic dictates to arrive at the concept that a musical work, as a multi-referential and multi-faceted *causa sui*, can be a radically individualized and unified compound of discretely meaningful moments. Leaving conceptually unmodified the *Einfälle* of a work at the surface of the composition achieves the goals of Schlegel's Romantic imperative; the brevity of

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the *Einfall*-as-primary-material is a natural byproduct of the Schlegelian aesthetic.

Koerppen offers a view of *Einfall* that seems applicable when considering the presence of transcribed creative revelation in Webern's bagatelles:

> These are the characteristic features *[Merkmale]* of *Einfall*: It is, in its clearest form, spontaneous and unprovoked. It is brief. It has a particular identity *[Qualität]*. It is accompanied by creative enthusiasm. It is the first stirring in the compositional process, both formally and compositionally psychological. It is a rhythmically distinct sound figure, abstract, without concept, and without preparation....The *Einfall* can comprise the work *in nuce* (378).[7]

Insofar as the *Einfälle* underlying Op. 9 conform to Koerppen's criteria and seem to emerge from the immediate perspective of the composer with virtually no outside mediation, Webern's opus achieves profound expressivity. And as expression and lyricism result naturally from one another when Webern places his *Einfälle* in such relief, his instrumental music assumes a lyrical aspect transcending that personified by even the genre of *Lied*.

ORGANICISM AND AGGREGATE COMPLETION

One way Webern's emancipated instrumental music maintains its Romantic heritage is by engaging nineteenth-century ideas about nature and organicism. Daverio identifies Schlegelian roots for considering ideal an organic artwork that comprises a set of "constituent parts [that] are 'coherent, inseparable..., [and] form an organic whole'" (Daverio, 185).[8] For Schlegel, the Romantic work

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arises and holds together through an organic interrelatedness of all its parts. It is a creation wherein "everything interpenetrates, and everywhere there is one and the same spirit, only expressed differently" (Daverio, 184).[9] An artwork with myriad constituent elements can achieve overall unification by maintaining the same creative spirit from one idea to another. One implication of this notion is that all components of the organically derived work arise from the same source, with each component different from the others on its surface yet identical to the others at its core. Unity and variety coexist within the organic totality.

Concern about unity as "the utmost relatedness between all component parts" (Webern 1963, 42) occupied Webern when composing his emancipated music. He believed that "Unity *[Zusammenhang]* is surely the indispensable thing if meaning is to exist" within a composition, and when embracing the emancipated compositional program he faced the imperative to amalgamate his music through non-tonal means. Webern believed organicism to be a philosophic solution to the question of how to unify emancipated music.

In his 1932 lecture series on "The Path to Twelve-Note Composition," Webern remarked, "Great composers have always striven to express unity as clearly as possible" (1963, 52). Noting that "*One* means of doing it was tonality. Another was provided by polyphony," Webern expresses his belief that polyphony had an ability stronger than tonality to "deepen and clarify the unity" of a given work, and he thought that music composed throughout the nineteenth century had moved from tonal unity toward thematic unity. Webern connected the thematic unification in work of Gustav Mahler and Johannes Brahms with a methodology that he discerned in Beethoven's music, especially the finale of the Ninth Symphony; likewise, Webern linked Beethovenian thematic unity to what he considered the ideal polyphonic genre, fugue.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe's treatises *The Metamorphosis of Plants* and

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Theory of Color influenced Webern's thoughts on thematic unity in music, and Webern aligned his ideas with Goethe's primordial plant *[Urpflanze]:* "In Goethe's *Urpflanze,* the root is...no different from the stalk, the stalk no different from the leaf, and the leaf no different from the flower: variations of the same idea" (Webern 1963, 53). This idea found throughout the *Urpflanze* reflects the elemental, "primeval form *[Urform]*...at the bottom of everything. Something that seems quite different is really the same." Webern's notion echoes Schlegel's Romantic concept of the organically complete work as that which presents a series of unique ideas yet sustains as an integrated and unified totality.

Such organic unification obtains throughout Webern's emancipated music. For example, while the individual ideas within Op. 9 are unique on both their transcribed surfaces and in their initial *Einfall*-forms, each bagatelle unifies through a particular means respective to each composition—as the major-seventh intervals and the (015) and (0145) pitch-class sets in the second bagatelle—and through formal use of the aggregate completion principle that recognizes each pitch-class as simultaneously unique and of the total group of twelve.

In Op. 9, Webern understands the group of twelve pitch-classes as a harmonic *bloc,* with each tone essential to the integral set. Such a view holds that the chromatic spectrum composes an aggregate: the twelve pitch-classes have no implicit hierarchy, yet each is vital to the total harmonic identity. This notion, then, does not consider the aggregate linearly, but spatially.

When used as the primary harmony within a work that is emancipated from the necessarily linear notions of consonance and dissonance, the aggregate harmony seems to remove the music from any explicit temporal dictate; the harmonic essence of the *bloc*-aggregate, as non-implicative, is static. This may account partly for why sculptor Josef Humplik could associate his own artistic practice with Webern's when commenting that "[Webern's] music does not con-

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vince me less than, for example, the three dimensions of the eastern portico of the Parthenon *[Seine Musik überzeugt mich nicht weniger, als z.B. die Plastiken vom Ostgiebel des Parthenon]*" (13). At root, aggregate completion is an architectural approach to harmony that considers the aggregate *en bloc,* an integral set of pitch-classes dwelling in nonlinear space.

Consistently using such a consideration of the twelve pitch-classes greatly assists in the theoretic unification of certain emancipated works composed by Webern. Aggregate completion helps Webern fulfill his "desire for maximum unity" and functions in Op. 9 as the "one basic idea" from which "everything is derived *[Das Bestreben höchster Zusammenfassung. Es ist alles aus Einem abgeleitet]*" (Webern 1963, 34; 1960, 36). In Six Bagatelles, Webern's consistently multifarious presentation of the twelve pitch-classes does not threaten overall unity; rather, the unique gestures lead from one to another with directed intent. The aggregate completion principle and the static ultimate harmony that principle implies gives harmonic unity to music comprising vertical occurrences that are free from any absolute, apriori logic of consonance and dissonance. Such a work unifies harmonically despite its continuous linear surface-changes and the dramatic individualization of each aggregate-presentation. Webern's *bloc* view of the aggregate helps enable such a regularly fluctuating sonic surface, and the necessarily linear engagement of brevity, in both part and whole, is an ineluctable quality of the music under study.

Understanding the aggregate as a harmonic *bloc* positions Webern's emancipated musical conception in what Regina Busch terms "musical space *[musikalische Raum]*" (229–35). Busch realizes that Webern's *bloc* harmonic understanding of the aggregate differs from an exclusively horizontal approach, and she notes that this distinction reveals itself when considering the title Webern gave his two lecture series. Observing that Webern's lessons on "The Path to the

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New Music *[Der Weg zur Neuen Musik]*" served as an introduction to twelve-tone methodology, Busch notes that the title of Webern's lecture-series of 1932, "The Path to Composition *in* Twelve Tones *[Der Weg zur Komposition in zwölf Tönen],*" distinguishes his fundamental understanding of the chromatic spectrum as a nonlinear, integral pitch-class-group that comprises a nonimplicative aggregate: "[T]he understanding Webern expressed through [his titular] formulation is a spatial understanding *[die Vorstellung, die Webern durch diese Formulierungen erweckt oder anspricht, eine räumliche Vorstellung ist]*" (Busch, 231).

As Webern recognizes the twelve chromatic pitches as a *bloc*-aggregate, he moves toward the "conquest, as well as the collection and capture, of pitch space *[die allmähliche Eroberung (auch »Erfassung« oder »Besitzergreifung«) des Tonbereiches]*" (Busch, 240) and realizes the freedom to transcribe an "ever clearer representation of (musical) thought *[die immer klarere Darstellung der (musikalischen) Gedanken].*" Since Webern abstractly conceives the aggregate spatially, he readily liberates his musical foundation from preestablished notions of consonance and dissonance, of genre, of form, and of necessarily requisite duration; consequently, any horizontal scoring of the harmonic pitch-class totality is free to unfold in a uniquely self-determined manner. As "[t]he formerly separate harmonic and melodic/contrapuntal aspects coincided in the twelve-tone constellation *[Der ehemals getrennte hamonische und melodisch-kontrapunktische Aspekt koinzidiert in Zwölftonkonstellation]*" (Döhl, 167), Webern received tremendous creative liberty. Through such freedom, he engaged a "functional system of note- and motivic-connections that worked within their own fundamental terms of reference" (Eimert, 3).

While the theoretic and conceptual terms of reference for Webern's emancipated music ultimately lie within the *Einfälle* underpinning each score, they nevertheless link to a spatial *bloc*-aggregate orientation. Webern's unified chro-

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matic spectrum effects an abstract structural framework held by no preordained rules to govern its temporal unfolding; dissonances are emancipated, and linear possibilities are subject only to the principle of nonrepetition. The spatial harmonic aggregate-*bloc* explodes creative possibilities while theoretically and conceptually anchoring the *Einfälle*.

HAIKU
OPUS 9/3

> In [the] period roughly between 1910 and 1914, Webern would go farther ahead—almost to the point of suffocation—in exploration of the microcosm.... This is the epoch of his extremely brief compositions: Six Bagatelles for String Quartet, Op. 9; Five Pieces for Chamber Orchestra, Op. 10; Three Pieces for Piano and Violoncello, Op. 11. In this last work, a parallel with Japanese haiku is established easily: one phrase suffices to put a universe in place and to position it with force (Boulez 1966, 369–70).[10]

When Pierre Boulez compares the Japanese poetic genre haiku and Webern's brief instrumental compositions, specifically, Op. 11, he closes with an idea recalling Mahler's well-known comment that for him to create a symphony was to create a world. Mahler founds much of his idea on the highly protracted time frames of his symphonies and seems to imply that extended temporal breadth is needed to effect such world-creation. Boulez understands a Webernian *univers de musique* to be different than a Mahlerian one: while Mahler's sound-worlds fill necessarily vast zones of time, Webern uses the temporal opposite to achieve

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the same effect. As in Chopin's Op. 28, Webern's musical universe connotes "the idea of the infinite in reverse form *[die Idee eines Unendlichen in umgekehrter Form]*" (Brandenburg, 54) by giving great implication to spaces that might comprise as little as one phrase; one of Webern's musical gestures, not in spite of but through extreme diminution, can suggest an infinite and iridescent expanse.

Kathryn Bailey articulates similar thoughts about the quartet bagatelles. "Schoenberg's oft-quoted celebration of Webern's brevity, in his introductory remarks to the Bagatelles Op. 9, 'to express a novel *[Roman]* in a single gesture, a joy in a breath,' has sometimes seemed to me somewhat overstated" (1997, 85), she writes, positioning Webern's composition alongside haiku and challenging the validity of a comparison between Op. 9 and the literary genre of *Roman*. Recognizing that the Webern bagatelles "are complete and self-contained in very small spaces," Bailey deems brevity incompatible with the idea of novel; to her, "a novel (for *novel*, read *sonata* or *symphony*) comprises a complex set of developments and relationships that require time to unfold." She continues,

> Surely the charm of these tiny pieces is not that they are novels, but precisely that they are *not*, that they have denied the necessity to be novels and present the possibility of a work of significance without a superstructure of themes and developments and interrelationships. They seem to me more *haiku* than *Roman*—each the fleeting expression of a single idea (85–86).

While Bailey's assumptions that the poetic genre of haiku is particularly suited to "[express] a single idea," that the essential nature of Webern's opus is "the fleeting expression of a single idea," and that "Opus 9 [is] a work...without a superstructure of themes and developments and interrelationships" are prob-

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lematic, she does touch upon valid points concerning Webern's opus and the idea of haiku. Most important to the present study is her transfer to Webern's bagatelles of Boulez's idea that Op. 11 relates to haiku and that the haiku genre is at odds with the Romantic novelizing principle.

Bailey roots the difference between novel and haiku in her antithetical consideration of *Roman* (something necessarily filling an extended space and containing a web of themes, developments, and interrelationships) and haiku (something necessarily brief and absent the above-described associative network); yet, such a divergent understanding of the two literary genres is not wholly tenable. While Bailey is correct to note that the typical Romantic novel tends toward the lengthy and often uses complexly intertwined components, to suggest that brevity, as found in Webern's bagatelles and as manifest by haiku, eschews a similar practice is erroneous. Much of this text aspires to demonstrate the opposite, and to challenge certain of Bailey's assumptions would be to repeat ideas voiced within the preceding pages. More useful is to engage what is helpful in the extract from Bailey, her association of haiku and Op. 9.

A haiku is a three-line poem with five syllables in its first and third lines and seven syllables in its second. Requiring neither rhyme-scheme nor syllabic stress, the only physical requirement of haiku is its syllabic arrangement: brevity thus is essential to the genre. The syllabic distribution reflects what haiku scholar Kenneth Yasuda identifies as a necessary "sense of harmony and balance" (60) by symmetrically balancing the seventeen syllables of the poem and, along with its attendant brevity, "emphasiz[ing] a unity in perception" (Yasuda, 67). This perceived unity encourages poet and reader to experience the apprehended haiku as "arising out of immediate sensuous perception, in which all things are one in, as [aesthetician Leone] Vivante has said, a *nexus* of essence" (Yasuda, 67).

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Along with a requisite physical and temporal structure, "in haiku the poet usually attempts to present a speaking object, around which and in which he has had an experience" (Yasuda, 41). When regarding this object in time and place, the haiku poet represents three vital components of the experience: *when*, *where*, and *what*. According to Yasuda, these properties "make that experience meaningful and alive. Without them the experience cannot be fully realized, nor can a haiku moment be created completely" (41). When, where, and what combine in the poem; "it is the relationship among them in a unified whole that is a haiku" (Yasuda, 54). Yasuda calls this unity the "haiku-experience."

One may relate the structural formulations of haiku and the Webern bagatelles. Similar to haiku, in Op. 9 aggregate completion influences the lengths of the units within a given bagatelle; Webern uses the aggregate completion principle as an architectural strategy that formally establishes points for beginning and ending, much like the requisite seventeen syllables of haiku. Yet, identifying the rudimentary formal criteria of haiku does not establish a functional and nonsuperficial understanding of the poetic genre; neither does partitioning a Webern bagatelle by its respective aggregate-unfoldings reveal its meaning. Webern's music is more than merely plotting out the aggregate-boundaries and filling in the space with a representative from each pitch-class, and a successful haiku is more than simply completing the five–seven–five syllabic directive and arbitrarily realizing the when/where/what triad. Crucially, haiku also demands that the poet present his or her work with "no commentary [and] no conclusion; the concrete, sensuous material to be intuited must stand alone" (Yasuda, 5). The elements within haiku must not be explained, through either reasoning or the authorial self and its accompanying emotional responses, for the proper haiku-attitude shows rather than tells: The haiku poet seeks the "representation of the object alone, without comment, never presented to be

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other than what it is" (Yasuda, 7). This does not suggest that the haiku need attempt offering a total representation of its meaningful object; rather, the poem should discreetly convey one unique view of the particular haiku-experience. Yasuda explains, "[T]he haiku poet...does not give us meaning; he gives us the concrete objects which have meaning" (7). Without authorial commentary, the specific when/where/what triad itself carries the meaning and the affect of the total haiku-experience; the haiku poet sets this meaningful content in relief when allowing the triad to speak for itself.

Webern similarly exhibits the musical meanings of a given bagatelle with the briefest of gestures and ascribes centrality to all details, regardless how minute, constituting every instant. The prime relevance of even the subtlest musical characteristics gives Webern's emancipated instrumental work meaningful implication throughout. Everything is important; everything contributes.

With well-defined timbre, articulation, dynamic, and pitch establishing its precise identity and reciprocity between its extreme brevity and expressive focus, each gesture of a Webern bagatelle is unique. In Op. 9, every discrete moment expresses by its presence the possibility for similarly discrete moments to exist, and this open-ended option enhances Webern's artistic liberty. His creative limitations include little more than the requisite when/where/what of music—i.e. the physics of practical sound-possibility—and the need to notate comprehensibly. The remaining artistic inhibitors are Webern's own and are tied only to the limit of his imagination and to the demands of his personal aesthetic.

Every aggregate-presentation can receive meaningful implication from its particular place within a score and can reinforce the structural and harmonic shape of the work. The third bagatelle of Webern's Op. 9 uses such a method of aggregate completion; see Example 4.3. As indicated in the example, the composition has four aggregates. Aggregate One spans mm. 1–2 and continues in the

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EXAMPLE 4.3: WEBERN, OPUS 9/3, PARSED TO SHOW ITS AGGREGATE-UNFOLDINGS

violin 1 and violoncello until C_4 (violin 1, m. 4); Aggregate Two begins in m. 3, violin 2 and viola, and ends at the close of m. 4; Aggregate Three begins with

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the violoncello triplet (m. 4) and finishes with the violoncello harmonic (m. 7); and Aggregate Four begins in the violin 1, violin 2, and viola (m. 7). With no G, this final aggregate is incomplete.

Webern shapes the music by discretely fashioning each aggregate-segment and by giving each presentation of the twelve pitch-classes an aurally perceivable unity. For example, at the seam between the second and third aggregates (m. 5) he emphasizes the difference between the two unfoldings with particular qualities that distinguish the aggregates from each other. At m. 5, Aggregate Three begins with *sforzando* tremolos in the three smaller instruments set against an emphatic linear passage in the upper register of the violoncello. This characterization contrasts that of Aggregate Two, which comprises a linear passage that crescendos, ascends, and accelerates through a single composite line that begins in the violin 2 (mm. 3–4) and transfers midway to the violin 1 (m. 4).

Yet, while Aggregates Two and Three have different aural characterization, Webern does not crudely expose the seam between the two; instead, he blurs their juncture by beginning Aggregate Three during the second half of Aggregate Two. Aggregate completion provides a formality that is not so strict as to supercede linear subversion; the spatial and atemporal essence of each aggregate allows such a free horizontal presentation of the chromatic spectrum as is heard in Webern's score.

The divide between Aggregates One and Two also is blurry. The violin 1 B♭ (m. 2) completes the first twelve-note collection, but by repeating B♭ and C (violin 1, mm. 2–4) and sustaining F♯ (violoncello, mm. 2–4) the time frame of Aggregate One extends to partly superimpose above Aggregate Two. This Aggregate-One carry-over has a character differing from that of the violin 2 and viola commencing Aggregate Two: Aggregate Two is a forward-moving upward burst from G_3 (m. 3) to $B\flat_6$ (m. 4), whereas Aggregate One continues by repeat-

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ing two static figures, the sustaining violoncello and the violin 1 oscillation between two pitches. Throughout Op. 9, aggregate completion not only demarcates boundaries within the music, themselves distinguished by varied methods of performance, but also allows those boundaries to be misty and tenuous.

With such an approach, each aggregate is an aurally recognizable unit. When establishing sectional division, aggregate completion can give the music a shape perceivable not only by the eye but also by the ear. Such application of the aggregate completion principle is largely responsible for creating in Op. 9/3 the sensation of "logical consistency," the notion "[t]hat in the temporal arts...one moment...issue[s] from another" (Adorno 1997, 136). Webern shifts his composition from having the *bloc* aspect of "[c]rude unmediated space" marked by "heterogeneity" into a linear form resembling a "musical continuum" (137) that nevertheless has discretely recognizable individual sections.

In addition, each aggregate has more than one musical characterization. Aggregate One, for example, comprises two distinct halves, with the first lasting the duration of m. 1 and the second spanning the length of the remaining aggregate-presentation. As well, both segments of Aggregate One include elements of different characteristics, with the first containing an arco quintuplet set against pizzicato double-stops and the second having the three unique elements of a sustained stopped-harmonic; a thirty-second note, *ponticello* oscillation; and individual *marcato* bowings of either of two pitches. The aggregate is an assemblage of ideas differentiated by unique methods of sound-production.

Webern gives the bagatelle linear direction by leading from one instrument to another within the same aggregate and by characterizing each aggregate with different principal methods of sound-production. Aggregate completion helps him create an overall form and theoretically unify the different segments of a given full-chromatic presentation despite the uniqueness of each seg-

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ment. Knowing how the sectional divisions of a budding composition will arise, Webern can direct linear motion through the work's internal divisions and across its total span. Aggregate completion allows strong variance and unity to coexist within the score; it also enables the composer to position his linear music within a logical and perceivable overarching harmonic framework.

Consequently, Webern may adhere especially closely to his *Einfälle*; the presence of unity and individuality, along with the implicit brevity of an aggregate and its unique gestures, allows such adherence. For example, the discrete *Einfälle* underlying the second half of the first aggregate within Op. 9/3 seem to be (1) the stopped harmonic in the violoncello; (2) the *am Steg* tremolo in the violin 2 that moves away from and back to *pianissimo*; and (3) the bowed and slightly accented eighth-note melodicization of two pitches a whole step apart in the violin 1. Aggregate completion offers Webern a way to give his initial ideas their necessary pitch specifications, and in so doing it limits the duration each gesture within an aggregate may have. He needs not extend his *Einfälle* when aggregate completion is the principal harmonic rule of the composition.

Neither is it appropriate for Webern to give his ideas any supplemental commentary by causing his subjective presence to overlay the score. Such an addition would be superfluous, for each *Einfall* occupies its own musical space and contains ample means of defining its unique character. Self-contained, each *Einfall* itself presents "the particulars in which [its] emotional powers...reside" (Yasuda, 7), and any subjective annotation from Webern would encroach upon the essential identity of each gesture. As they stand, the ideas express a pure musicality; any extraneous accoutrement would jeopardize this purity. That the moments are lyrical is certain, and their increase in density significantly contributes to a heightening of this expressivity. But they do not express, as a sort of musical simile, some concrete, extended something; they do not point toward an

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outside state and claim to be like that state or expressions of that state. Rather, the gestures function metaphorically: Each *is* the expressed state.

Both Webern's bagatelles and haiku attempt preserving the natural creative impulse with a view toward the embodiment of purity. Yasuda writes, "When a person is interested and involved in the [perceived] object for its own sake,...a haiku attitude is formed" (11), and he identifies this haiku attitude as "a state of readiness for an experience which can be aesthetic." In Op. 9, each *Einfall* seems to come from an openness akin to Yasuda's haiku attitude; Webern seems to apprehend his *Einfälle* in "a state of readiness [and] receptivity...for a disinterested...single-minded activity" (Yasuda, 12). This final criterion for a haiku, that the poet receive his or her material without affective interest, is vital.

Webern's bagatelle, so conceived, relates to haiku theorist Otsuji's description of the true haiku moment:

> At the instant when our mental activity almost merges into an unconscious state—i.e., when the experience between subject and object is forgotten—we can experience the most aesthetic moment. This is what is implied when it is said that one goes into the heart of created things and becomes one with nature (Yasuda, 31).[11]

Yasuda adds that "To render such a moment is the intent of all haiku" (31), and it does seem viable to understand similarly Webern's *Einfall*-centric, organic music. As he attempts unification with the natural, Webern can present each of his brief creative experiences in a form approaching representational purity. He gives his *Einfälle* no commentary or conscious judgment but instead receives the creative bursts as they come and allows them to exist with as untrammeled a

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character as possible; such is Webernian creative purity.[12]

The closeness between Webern's bagatelles and natural purity helps enable the sense that the individual gestures of the opus appear only as they could and without reconciliation to some external directive. As in a "well-realized haiku [wherein] the three elements [when/where/what] are so unified that they are immovable and that no substitute is possible" (Yasuda, 54), Webern's particular assemblage of the gestures within a given bagatelle has an air of inevitability; the gestures themselves, seemingly presented with strong adherence to their respective *Einfälle*, effect such an aura. For Webern, all exceptional art, through its essential, natural purity, "cannot have come into being as humanity...imagin[ed]..., [for] man is only the vessel into which is poured what 'nature in general' wants to express" (Webern 1963, 11). Such an outlook brings Webern to comment, "[The] high works of art were at the same time brought forth as humanity's highest works of nature, according to true and natural laws. Everything arbitrary or illusory falls away; here is necessity, here is God." For Webern, the masterwork appears when, where, and in what state it must, and its artist exclusively subjects these properties to the will of nature.

With Webern's haiku-bagatelle emphasizing (1) the idea of natural and untarnished purity; (2) an inherent, tightly knit organic unity recalling Goethe's *Urpflanze*; (3) a certain inevitability; (4) no superfluous authorial commentary; (5) a presence that seems self-contained through the implication of self-determination and uncompromised individuality; and (6) extreme specificity that suggests the general, its creative model is not as removed from Schlegel's idea of *Roman* as one initially might assume. The brevity of the haiku-bagatelle does not eliminate this Schlegelian connection; rather, by serving to enable and project the above-noted characteristics, brevity centrally enhances the impression that the haiku-bagatelle is a Romantic work at it most basic and essential level.

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The haiku-bagatelle links strongly with its nineteenth-century aesthetic and philosophic heritage, and by essentially using brevity, *Sechs Bagatellen für Streichquartett* reaches Schlegel's ideal of Romantic poetry. As "progressive universal poetry *[progressive Universalpoesie]*" (Schlegel 1964, 39), Webern's work expresses extreme particularity and implies transcendence of its specificity. The haiku-bagatelle attains what Schlegel believes is foundational to his poetic ideal, a multifaceted aspect that, while evoking solidity, seems to transcend the particular moment and to effect a perpetual state of evolution: "[I]ndeed, this is [the] essential nature [of Romantic poetry], that it is eternally becoming and can never be completed *[vollende(n)]*.... It alone is infinite, just as it alone is free" (1964, 39).[13]

SILENCE

> Silence is deeper than speaking; from silence springs speaking, and returns to it....The brevity of haiku has its origin in the endeavour to appeal from the unconscious in one human being to the unconscious in others (Blyth, 220–21).

Like haiku, Webern's brief instrumental work stands at the edge of representation and peers into the depths of silence. Poised on this brink, the brief composition broaches the frontier dividing acoustic and conceived music, the physics of sound from the impalpable waves of thought. This seems to be the impossible goal of musical brevity, that the entire work evaporate and achieve unmitigated purity through the process of distillation. Progressive elimination of the inessential and consolidation of the vital ideally would erase the work itself.

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Webern's bagatelles allude to silence and an ultimate desire to become quiet. Adorno sees such allusion as a leaning toward "the moment of falling mute *[Verstummen]*," an artistic striving for the merger of "[a]esthetic transcendence and disenchantment *[Entzauberung]*" (1997, 79). When considering the oeuvre of Samuel Beckett an example of creative work born of such an urge, Adorno infers "a language *[Sprache]* remote from all meaning." This "is not a speaking language," Adorno claims, but one having an "affinity to muteness."

> Perhaps all expression, which is most closely related to transcendence, is as near to falling mute as is the great new music wherein nothing is so full of expression as that which flickers out *[Verlöschende]*, that tone starkly disengaging itself from the dense musical texture. At such a moment, art, by virtue of its own movement, converges with its natural element *[Naturmoment]*.[14]

The self-expression of the brief Webern compositions, the way in which each articulates nothing outside its own unique essence, is a principal contributor to their falling-silent quality. Their motion toward silence and acoustic disappearance has as its desired goal the point at which music transcends all foreign artificiality, including even the presence of the composer-as-conduit, and achieves the purity of its *Naturmoment*.

Brevity is a crucial agent helping to keep Webern's music within the pure-thought domain. For Webern, brevity is the fragile bridge between *Einfall*/thought and transcription/action. Recognizing this, Zenck writes,

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> The more concentrated the detail of the expression, the more brief the form becomes. It always draws closer together the moment of sound and suspension *[Pause]*. For Webern, this moment of nothingness-as-silence was the place of greatest richness (194).[15]

Thus apprehended, the purest music is silent. Aware of the impossibility of such an absolutely pure music that transcends all mediation, Webern diminishes his time frames to the point that his bagatelles move perilously close to nothingness and almost vanish.

In 1802–3, F. W. J. Schelling wrote, "Music, as art, is subordinate to the first dimension from whence it springs *[Die Musik ist als Kunst ursprünglich der ersten Dimension untergeordnet]*" (319). This first dimension is Time, and when Schelling comments, "The necessary form of music is succession *[Die nothwendige Form der Musik ist die Succession]*," he sees that "time is the universal condition for shaping the infinite in the finite *[Denn Zeit ist allgemeine Form der Einbildung des Unendlichen ins Endliche]*." Nevertheless, when transcribing the endless and transferring it to the temporal world, the composer brings the tacit, immeasurable being of musical thought to occupy quantifiable space and gives the sound-idea an aspect mediated by time itself.

Acoustic representation, in formats both visual and aural, always affects the being of a composition; tangible solidification ineluctably alters the reality of the mental musical image. Purity can be neither notated nor sounded, and the idealistic, yet futile, creative desire to achieve a purely scored music without any mediation seems the principal motivation underlying Webern's idea of brevity. Music achieves satori when unscored and unheard, with the receptive mind of the still composer intuiting the continuously revealing musical essence.

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NOTES

1. "Alle Werke, die seit dem Verschwinden der Tonalität bis zur Aufstellung des neuen Zwölftongesetzes geschaffen wurden, waren kurz, auffallend kurz. — Was damals Längeres geschrieben wurde, hängt mit einem tragenden Text zusammen (Schönberg „Erwartung" und „Die glückliche Hand", Berg „Wozzeck"), also eigentlich mit etwas Außermusikalischem. — Mit der Aufgabe der Tonalität war das wichtigste Mittel zum Aufbau längerer Stücke verlorengegangen. Denn zur Herbeiführung formaler Geschlossenheit war die Tonalität höchst wichtig. Als ab das Licht erloschen wäre! — so schien es. (Wenigstens kommt es uns heute so vor.) Damals war alles in unsicherem, dunklem flusse — sehr an- und aufregend, so daß die Zeit fehlte, den Verlust zu merken. — Erst als Schönberg das Gesetz aussprach, wurden größere Formen wieder möglich" (Webern 1960, 57–58).

2. "Die äußerst formintensiven Werke zwischen op. 5 und op. 11 setzen dort an, wo Beethoven in seinen späten Bagatellen und in den Diabelli-Variationen aufgehört hatte: an dem Ort der Durchführung, an dem die thematische Arbeit von der Verdichtung in die Auflösung und Zerbröckelung motivischer Gebilde umschlägt."

3. Also see Julian Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), and Anne Schreffler, "Webern and the Transformation of Nature (review)," in *Music Theory Spectrum* 24/2 (Fall 2002): 294-299.

4. "Weberns 'lyrische Natur' ist...nicht im engen Sinn des Liedbegriffs oder überhaupt außermusikalischer Bedeutung zu verstehen, sondern umfassender als Gabe, in allen Verhältnissen, d.h....auch in den reinmusikalischen Verhältnissen deren inneren Ausdruck wahrzunehmen."

5. "[D]as Formproblem durch die Textvertonung lösende Möglichkeit hat Webern ebenfalls verworfen...die nicht nur zur Integration der Vokal- in die Instrumentalmusik führen sollte..., sondern durch die formale und inhaltliche Einheit des Textes der Form einen inneren Zussammenhang geben sollte."

6. "Aus der lyrischen Meditation Weberns resultiert, daß mit jedem Reduktionsschritt die Ausdrucksintensität der reduzierten Gestalt gesteigert erscheint, wie umbekehrt das Bedürfnis, den Ausdruck zu intinsivieren, zur Reduktion sowie zur bewußteren Kontrolle der Gestalten führt."

7. "Dies sind die Merkmale des Einfalls: er tritt in seiner reinsten Form plötzlich und unprovosiert auf. Er ist kurz. Er hat Qualität. Er ist von »kreativem

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Enthusiasmus« begleitet. Er ist die erste Beweger im Kompositions-prozeß, formal und kompositionspsychologisch. Er ist eine rhythmisch distinkte Klangfigur, keine Idee, kein Abstraktum, kein Prapärat....Der Einfall kann das Werk in nuce enthalten."

8. Daverio quotes Schlegel, *Ideen*, no. 95, *Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe*, edited by Ernst Behler, Jean-Jacques Anstett, and Hans Eichner, 35 vols. (Munich, Praderborn, Vienna: Schöningh, 1958–).

9. Daverio quotes Schlegel, *Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe* 2 (313).

10. "Dans cette periode, qui va de 1910 à 1914 environ, Webern ira plus avant, presque jusqu'à l'asphyxie, dans l'exploration de ce microcosme vers lequel l'avait déjà....*Six Bagatelles* pour quatuor à cordes, opus 9, *Cinq Pièces pour orchestre de chambre*, opus 10, *Trois Pièces pour piano et violoncelle*, opus 11. Dans ces derrières, le parallèle avec le *haï-kaï* japonais s'établit aisément: une phrase suffit à mettre en place un univers et à l'imposer avec force."

11. Yasuda's source is Otsuji (Seki Osuga), *Otsuji Hairon-shû* (*Otsuji's Collected Essays on Haiku Theory*), edited by Tôyô Yoshida, 5th Edition (Tokyo: Kaede Shobô, 1947): 4.

12. "When there is any feeling of competition, of enmity with nature, of desire to *use* things, instead of having them *be*, when anything is *wanted*,—purity is no longer there" (Blyth, 146).

13. Peter Firchow's translation (175) of Schlegel's *Athenäums-Fragmente* has been consulted. Schlegel's original: "Die romantische Dichtart ist noch im Werden; ja das ist ihr eigentliches Wesen, daß sie ewig nur werden, nie vollendet sein kann....Sie allein ist unendlich, wie sie allein frei ist..."

14. The translation by Robert Hullot-Kentor has been emended. Adorno's original: "Daß die bedeutungsferne Sprache keine sagende ist, stiftet ihre Affinität zum Verstummen. Vielleicht ist aller Ausdruck, nächhstverwandt dem Transzendierenden, so dicht am Verstummen, wie in großer neuer Musik nichts so viel Ausdruck hat wie das Verlöschende, der aus der dichten Gestalt nackt heraustretende Ton, in dem Kunst vermöge ihrer eigenen Bewegung in ihr Naturmoment mündet" (1970, 123).

15. "Je kürzer die Form wird, desto konzentrierter der Ausdruck-im-Detail, den sich immer mehr zusammenzieht auf den Tonpunkt und auf die Pause, das Nichts, das für Webern als Stille zugleich den Ort höchster Fülle bedeutet."

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AFTERWORD

The preceding study primarily examines brevity's influence on three notable compositions and positions itself before other unexamined works. While the goal of this text is to reveal the critical importance of brevity in Beethoven's final bagatelles, Chopin's preludes, and Webern's bagatelles, the strategies used to discuss these works are available for future examination of how brevity might affect a given composition.

Brevity is essential to each work studied here. It affects Beethoven's Op. 126 with regard to form, one hallmark of Classical-era music. In Chopin's Op. 28, it influences the primary motives, the orientation toward harmonic progression, and the subtle details of performance. In Webern's Op. 9, it embraces the music so completely that any one musical parameter can be fully assessed or appreciated only when considering the direct influence of brevity.

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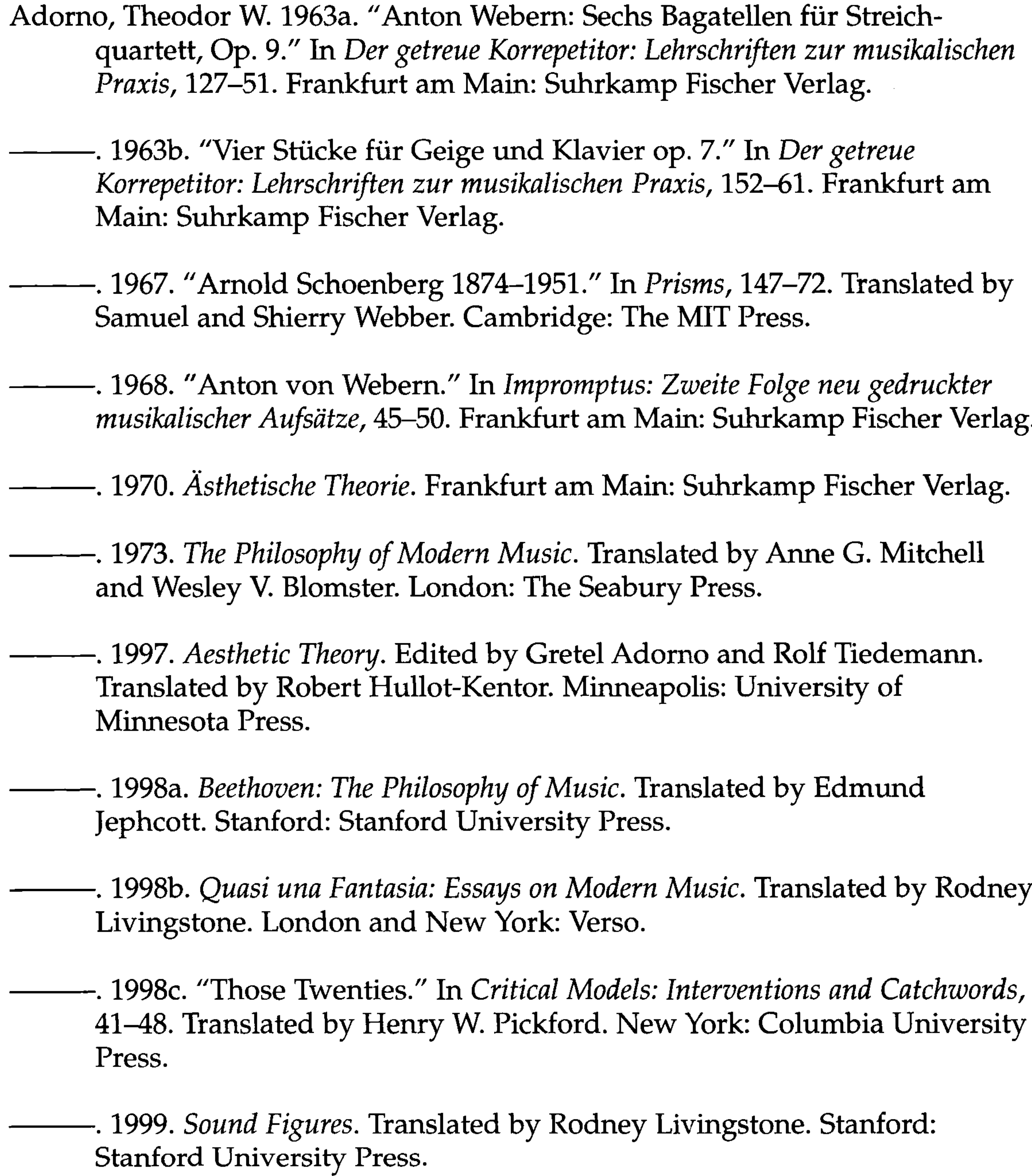

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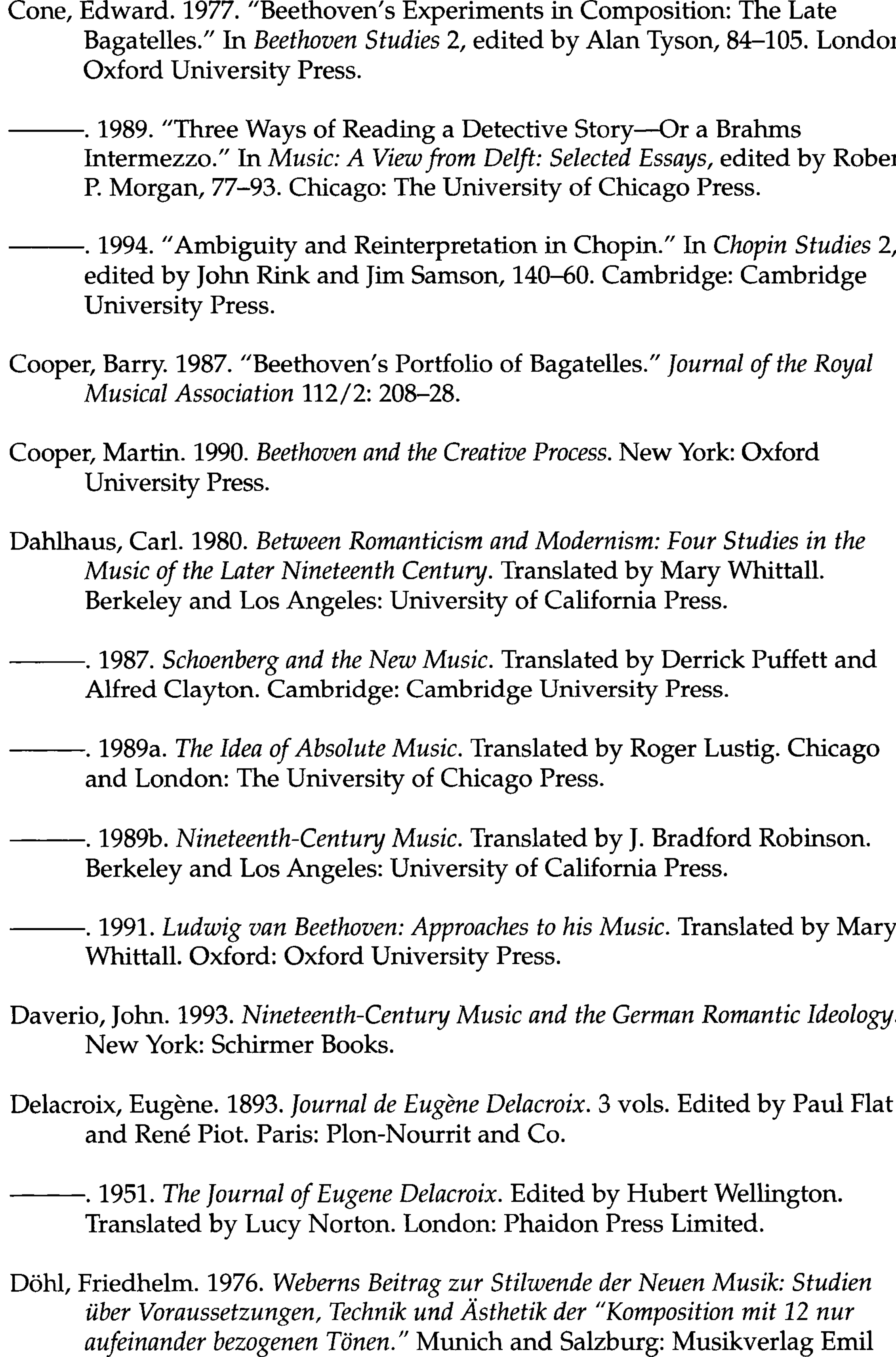

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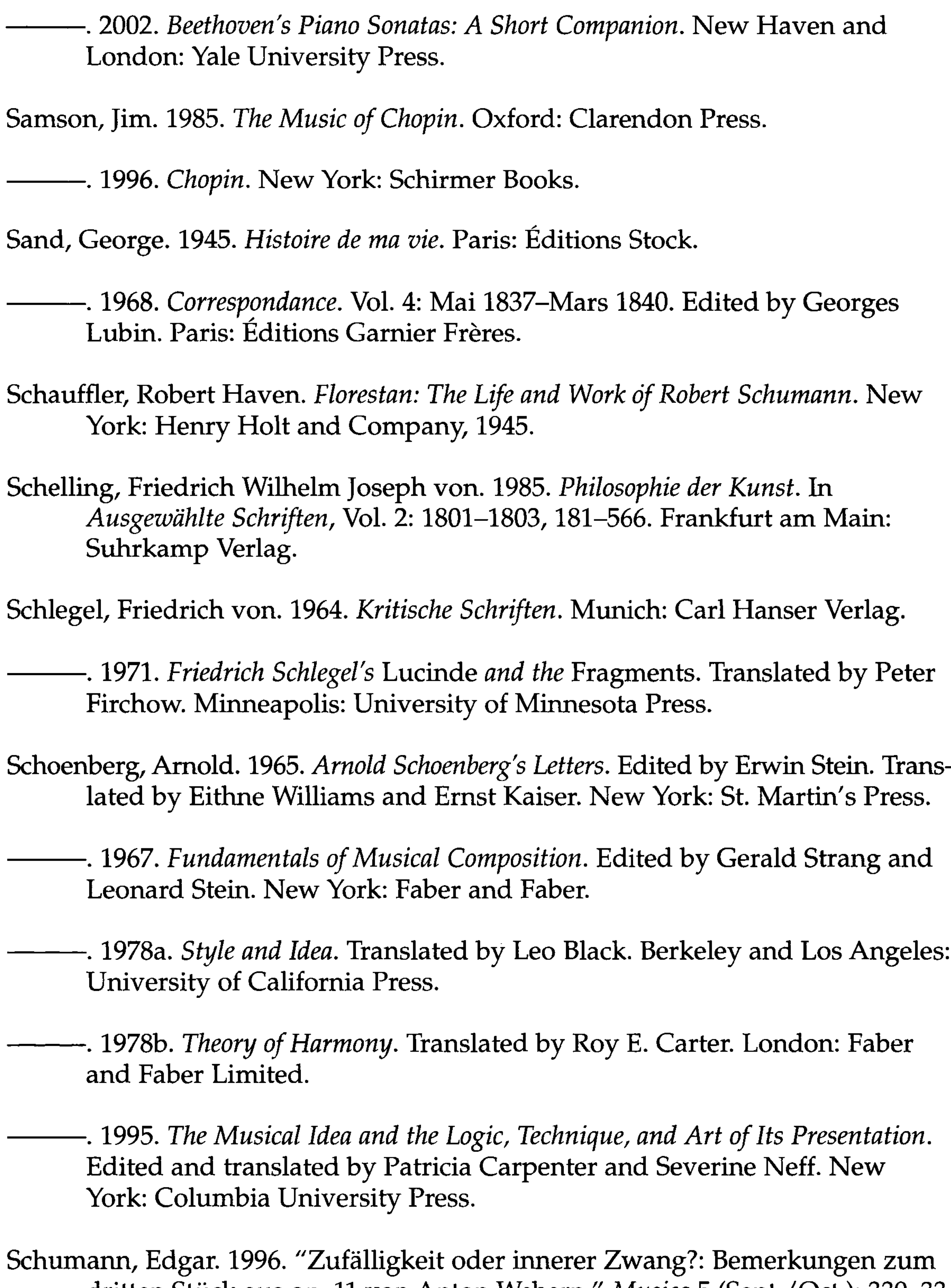

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ASTEROIDEA

by

JOSEPH EARL ROGERS

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2005

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ABSTRACT

ASTEROIDEA

by

JOSEPH EARL ROGERS

Advisor: Bruce Saylor

Asteroidea is an original composition for woodwind quintet.

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to J

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT iv

NOTATION vii

ASTEROIDEA 1

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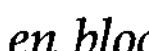
NOTATION

Oscillate between the pitches for the duration indicated. Although these oscillations are out of sync with the rest of the ensemble, they should be steady and even.

Perform boxed (bloc) material unsynchronized with the rest of the ensemble, yet rhythmically steady and even, until indicated. Bloc tempi are moderate throughout the score and disregard any surrounding tempo or meter.

After completing the current bloc cycle, advance to the consequent new material. Vertical alignment of notes after this symbol is approximate, for the alignment of the different parts may vary with each performance.



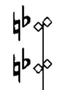
No accent, pulse, dynamic gradation, timbral modification, etc. All boxed material should be performed *en bloc.*

No time signature; *senza misura.*

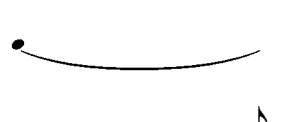
Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon: Harsh, impure, or otherwise unusual timbre uncharacteristic of the instrument. Included are timbres resulting from unusual embouchure, the use of percussive effects (such as key clicks), and so forth.

Horn: Air only (no pitch).

These noteheads represent multiphonics. They do not specify pitches but indicate that some multiphonic, chosen by the performer, should be sounded. In such instances, the multiphonic effect is more important than the actual component pitches.



Diamond noteheads direct the performer to play any one of the indicated pitches or a multiphonic that includes any of the given tones.



Sustain note through unmeasured passage.

Release note.

Passages Without Meter (e.g. 33 et seq.): In these instances, it is impossible to represent a distinct vertical image of the discrete lines, as the instruments may align uniquely with each performance. However, the ensemble can return to exact meter at specific points by following prominent aural cues.

Metronome Markings are approximate, but performers should maintain the intent of the indicated tempi.

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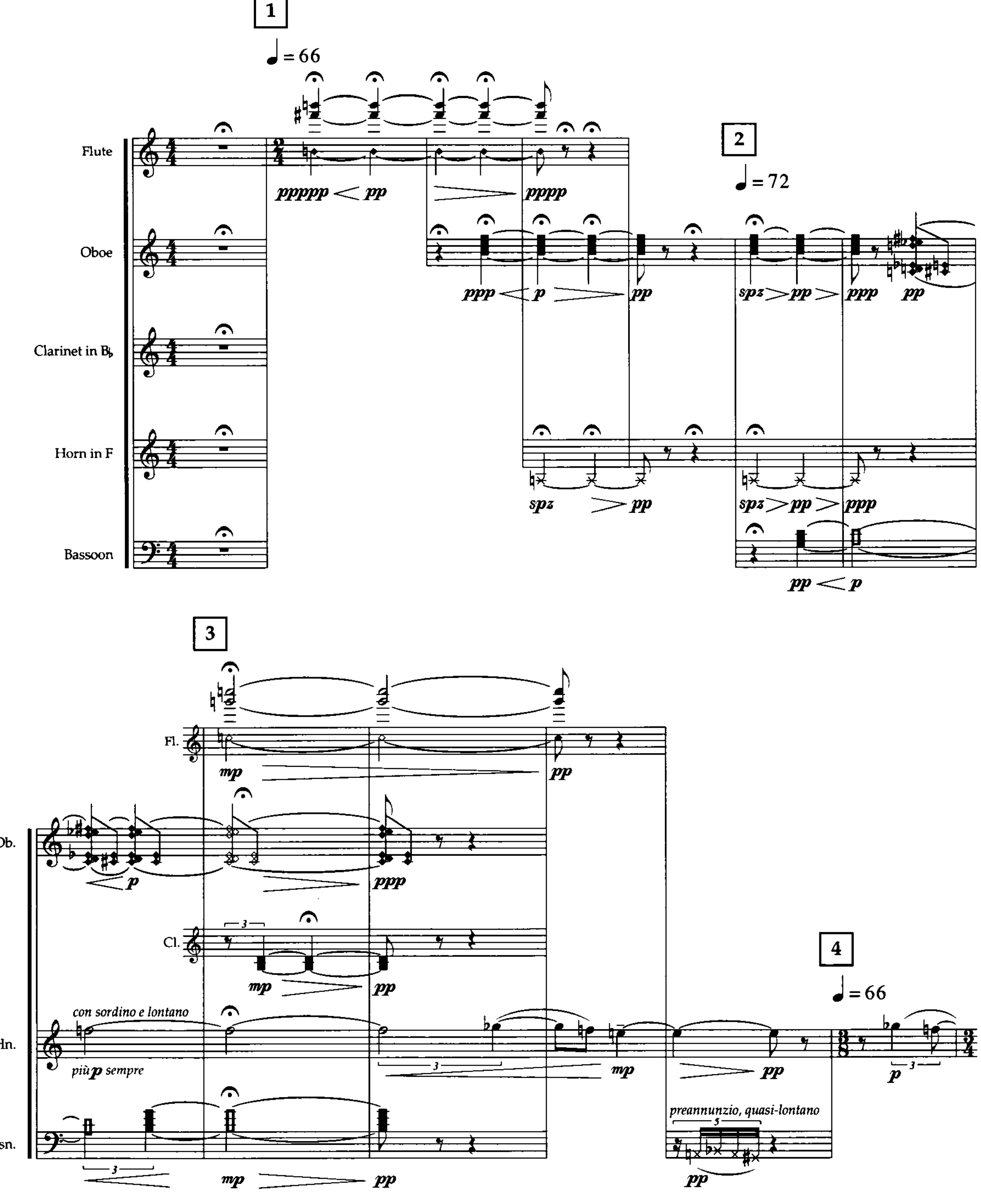
ASTEROIDEA



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5

♩ = 100

Ob.

pp sempre

Cl.

p sempre

esp.

p poco cresc.

Hn.

senza sordino

pp

p

gl.

Bsn.

pp come prima

p non cresc.

sub.f

p

sfz

p

6

♩ = 66

Fl.

più p

p

mp

Cl.

mp

p

p sempre

Hn.

mp

p

gl.

mp

p

Bsn.

energico

mp

mf

f > *p*

"death rattle"

-1

p < *mf* > *p*

mp <

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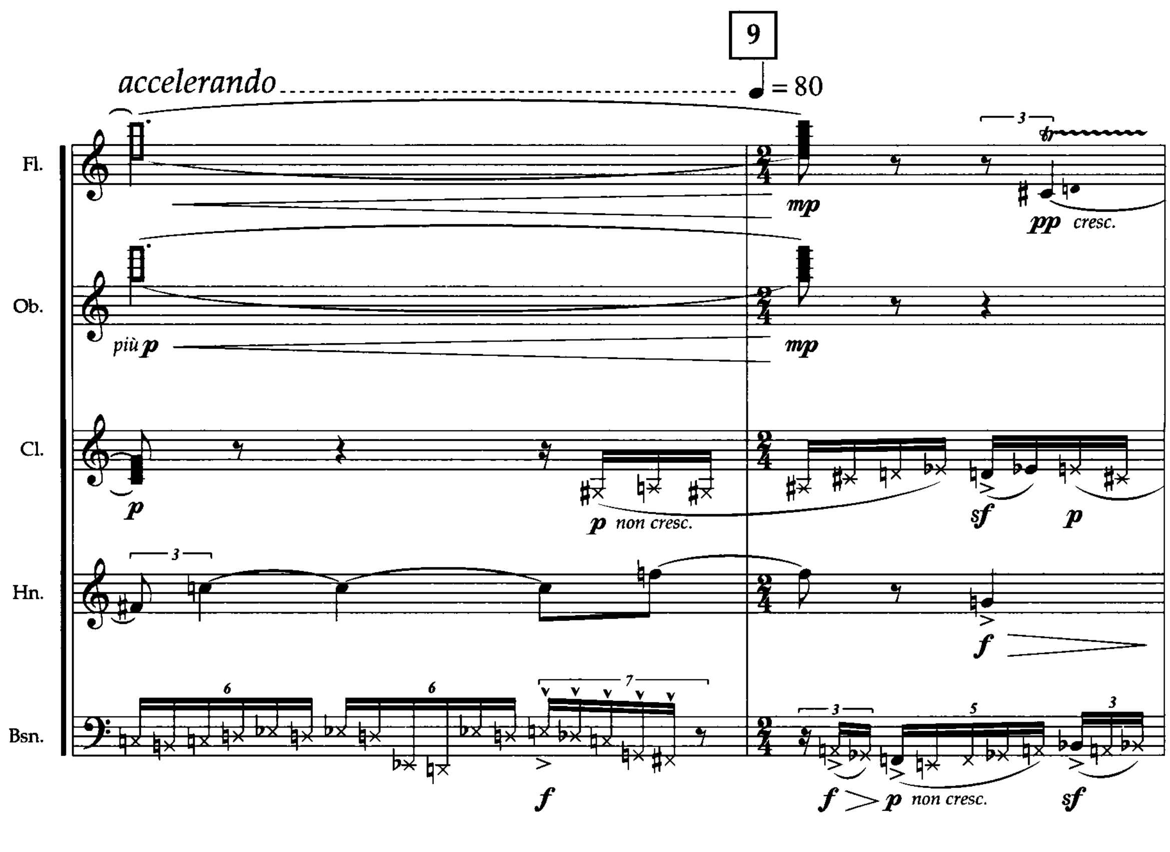

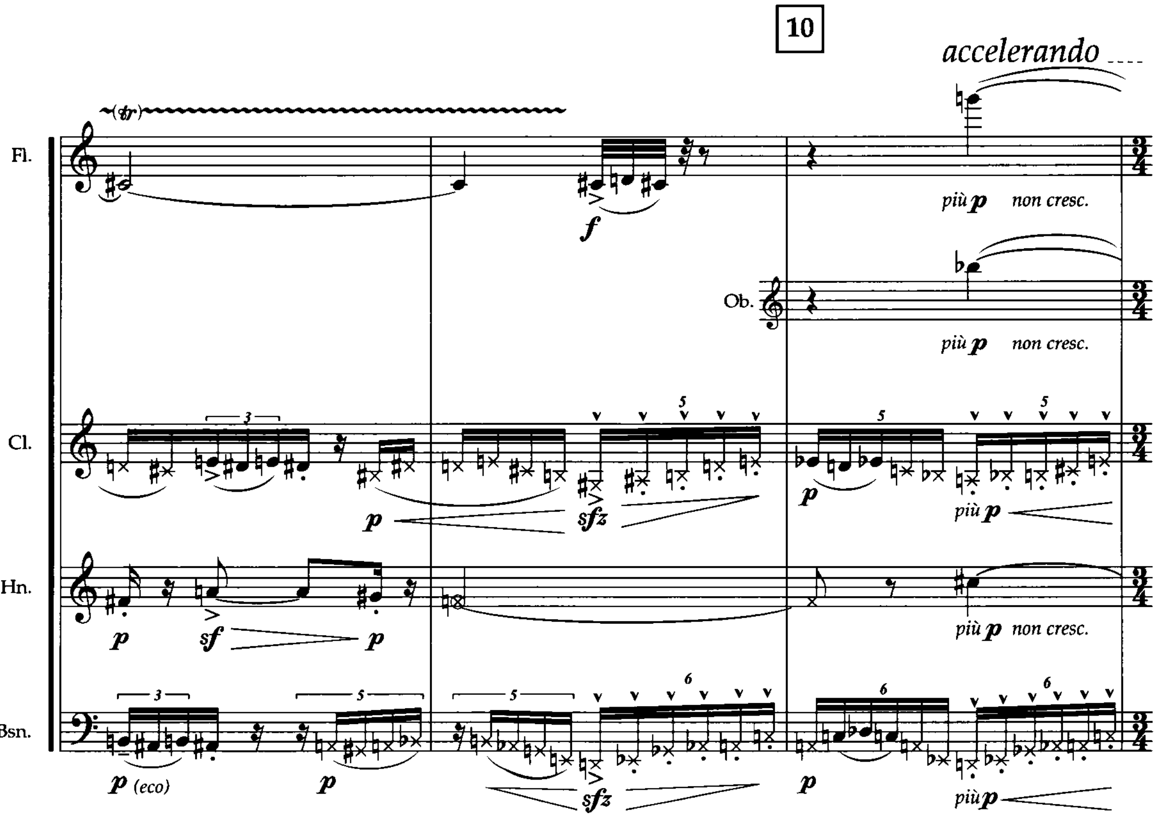

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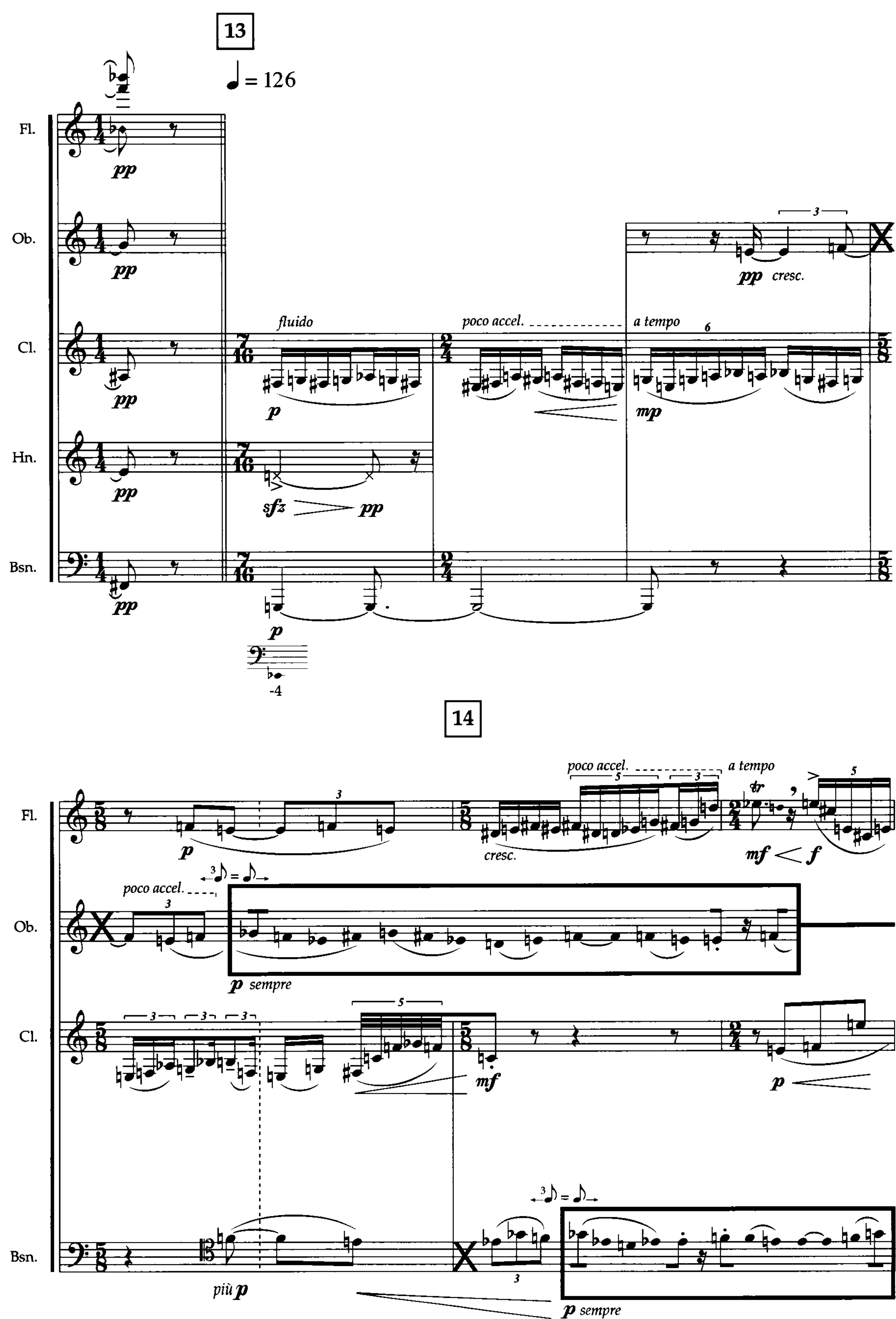

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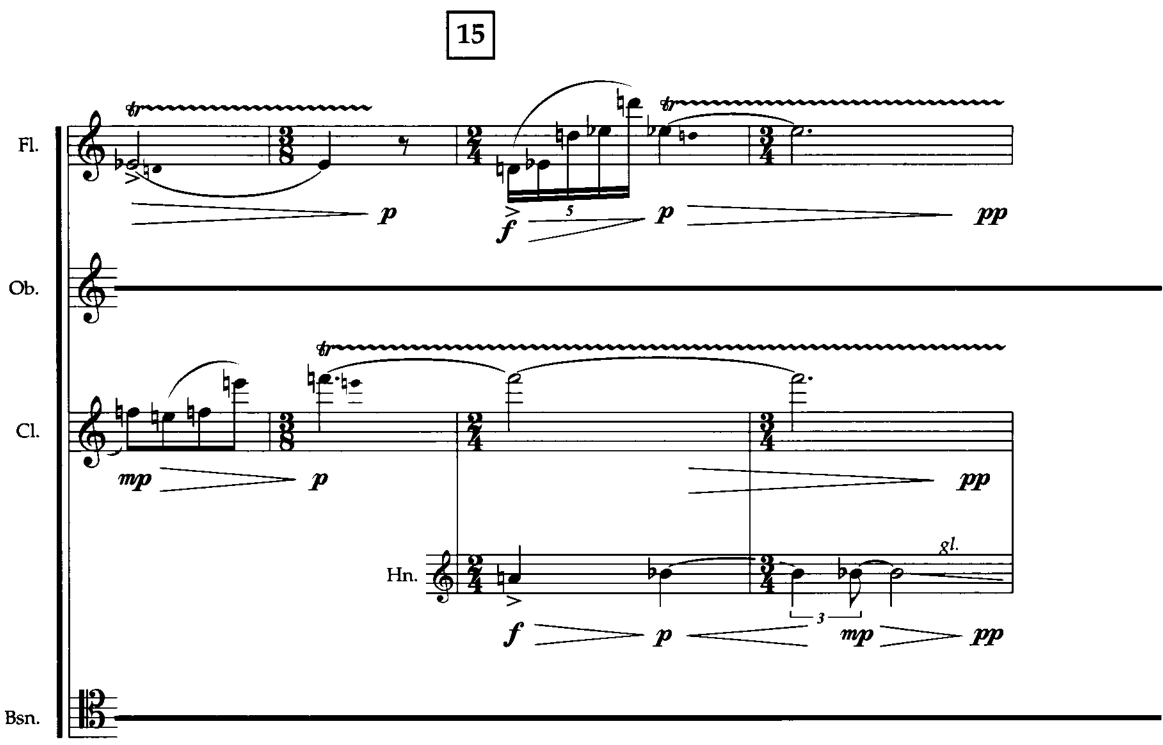

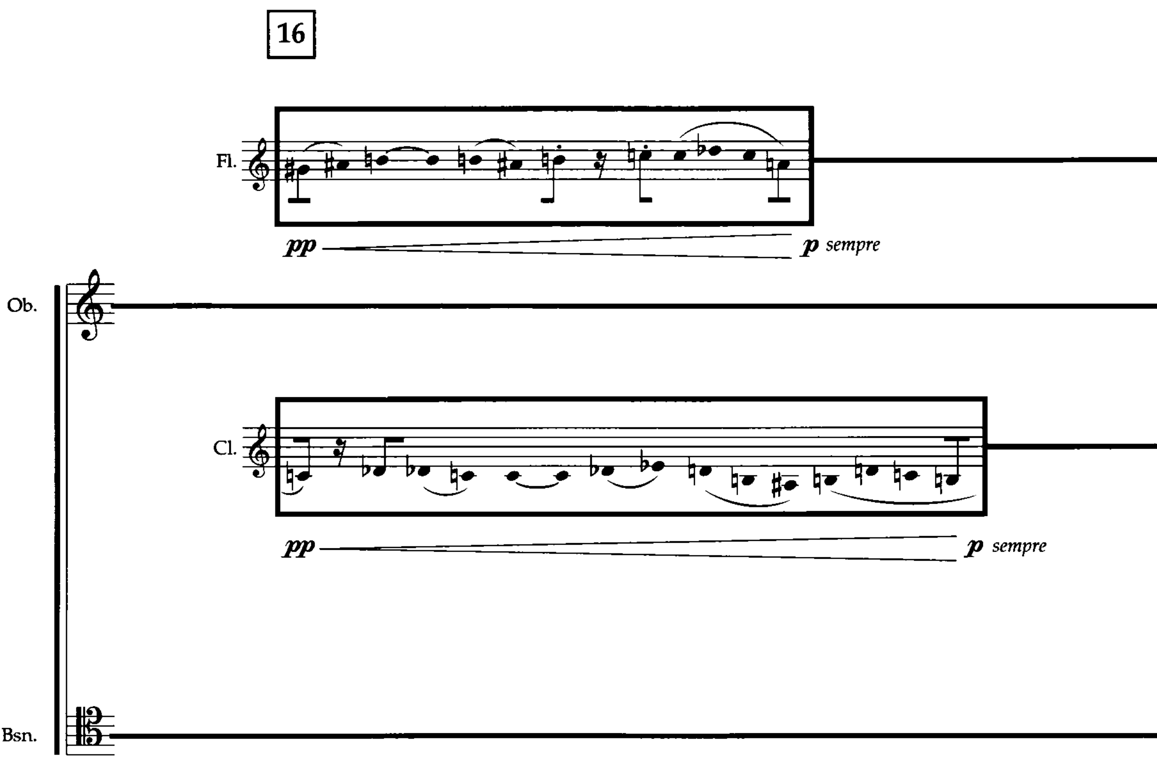

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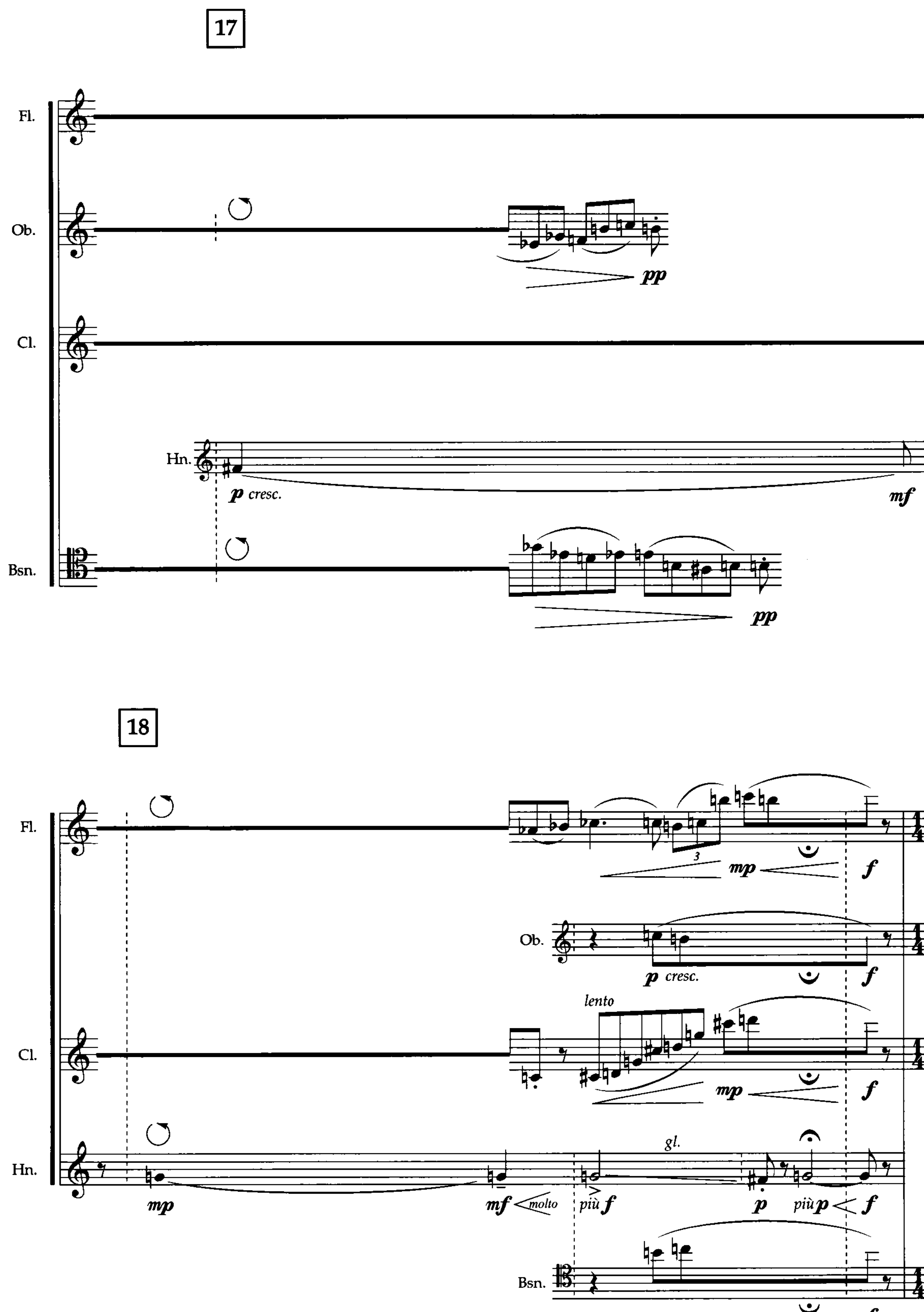

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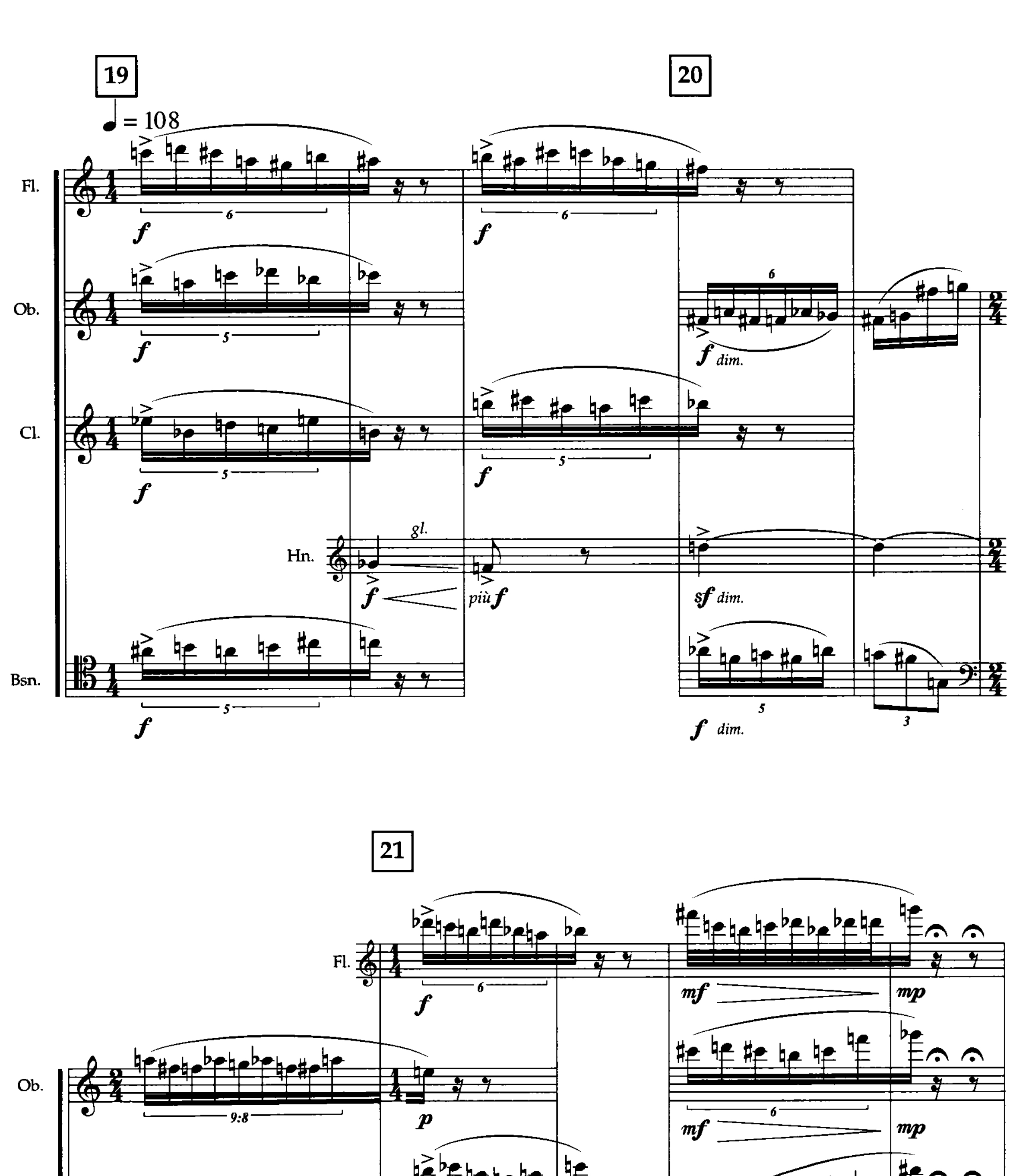

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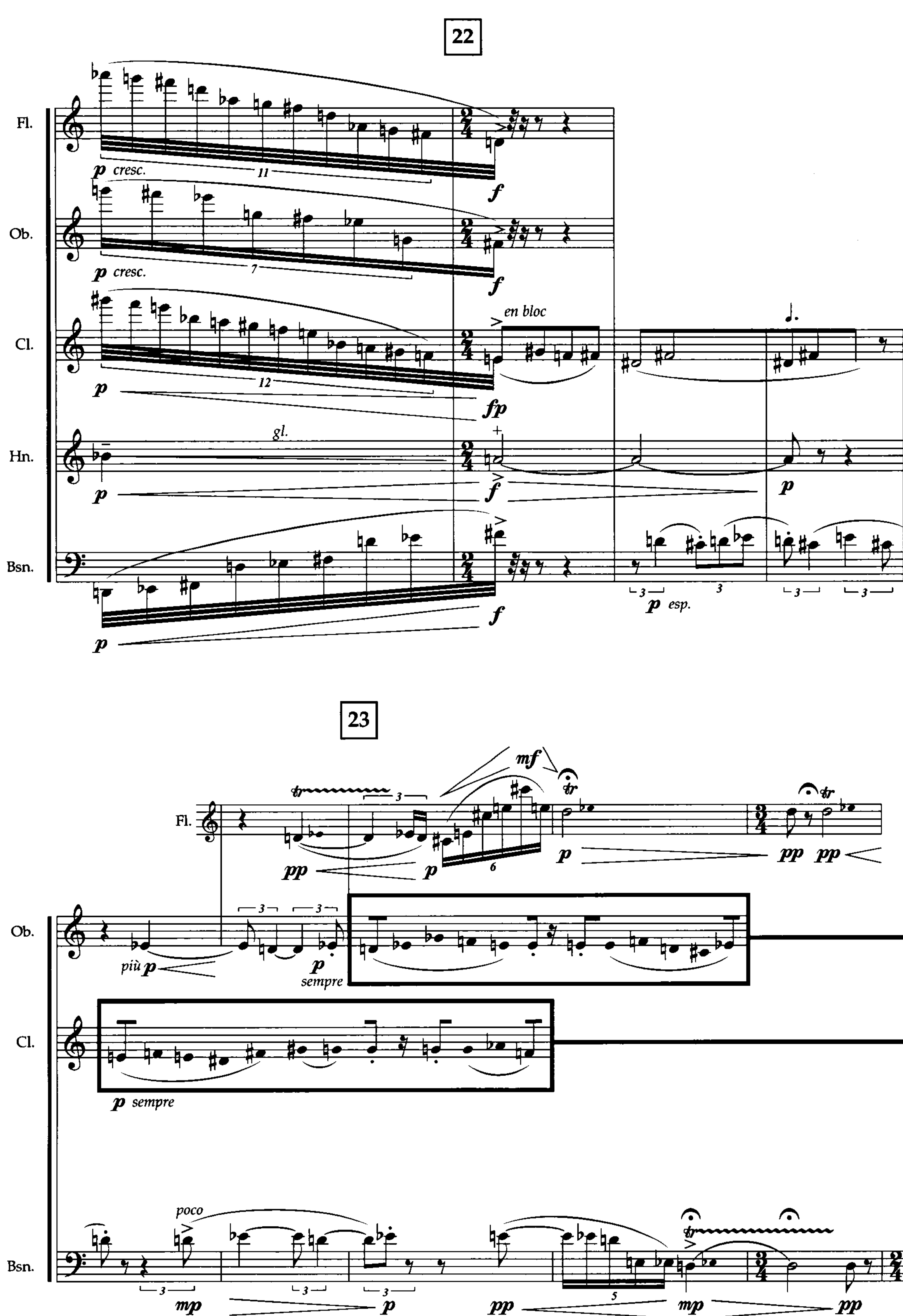

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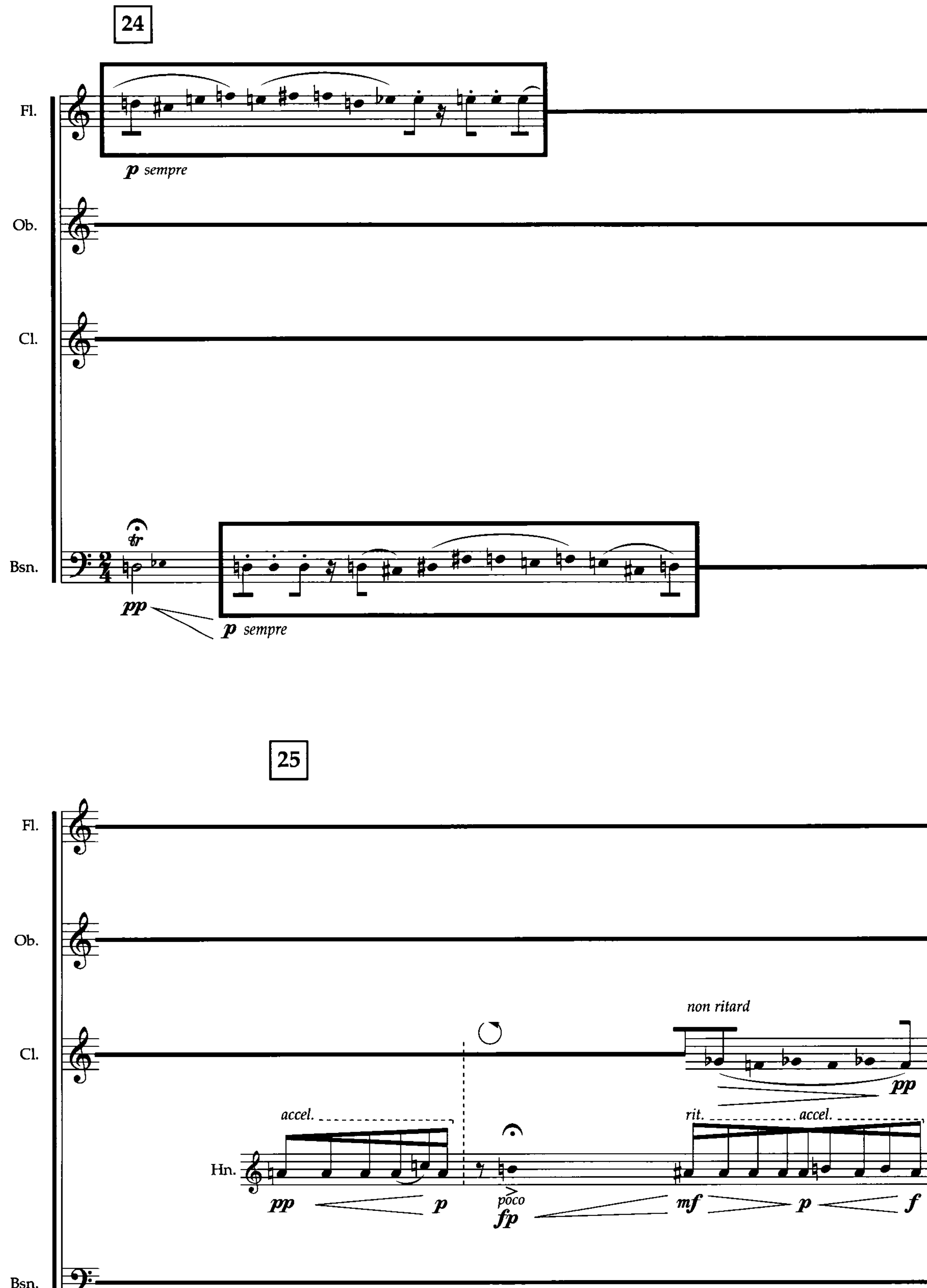

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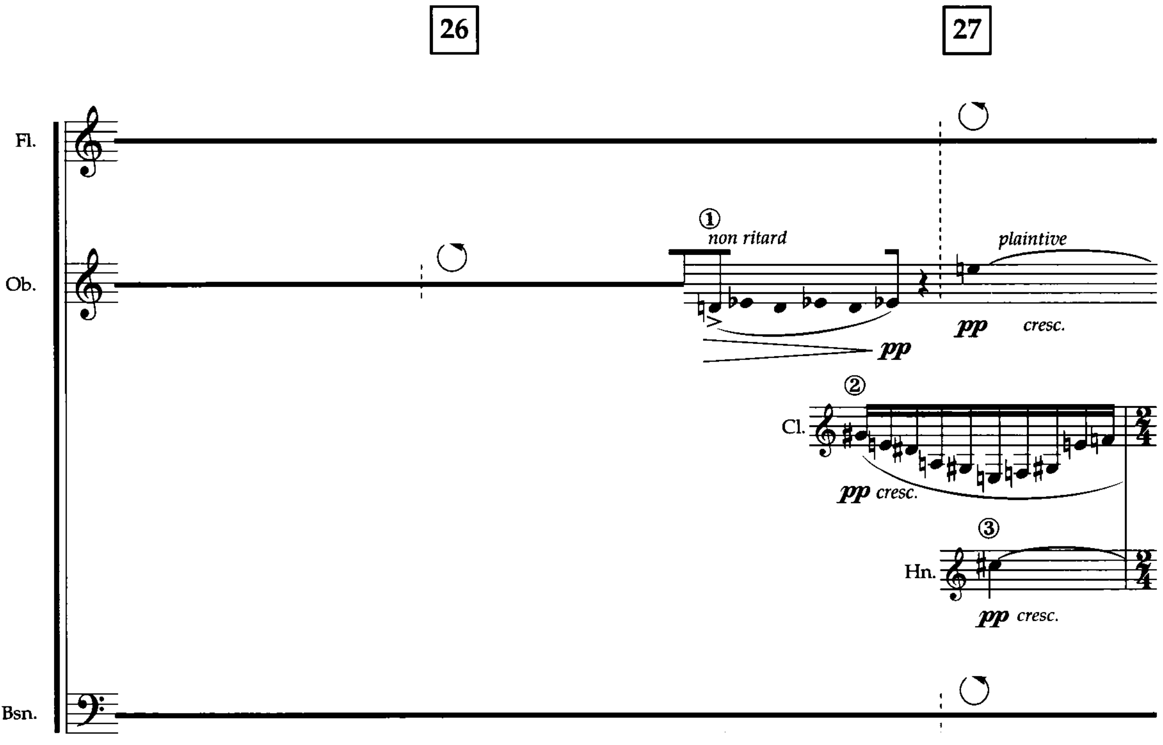

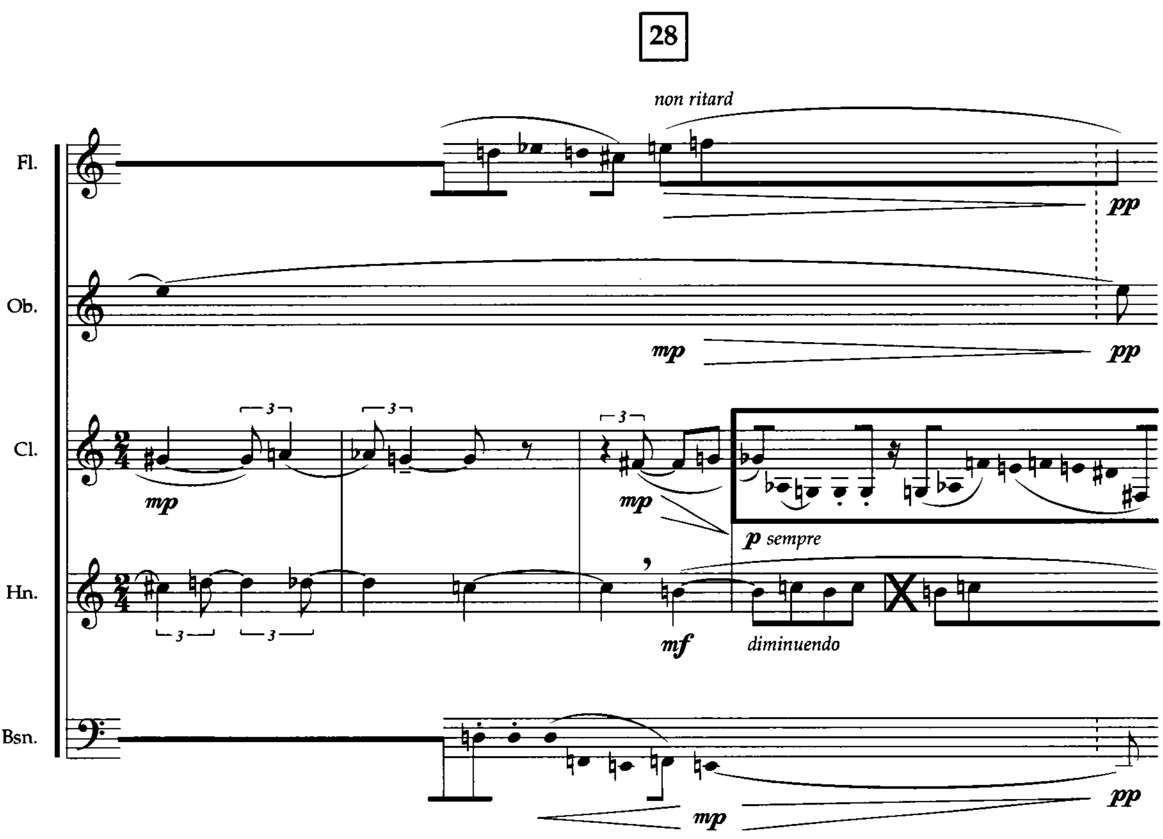

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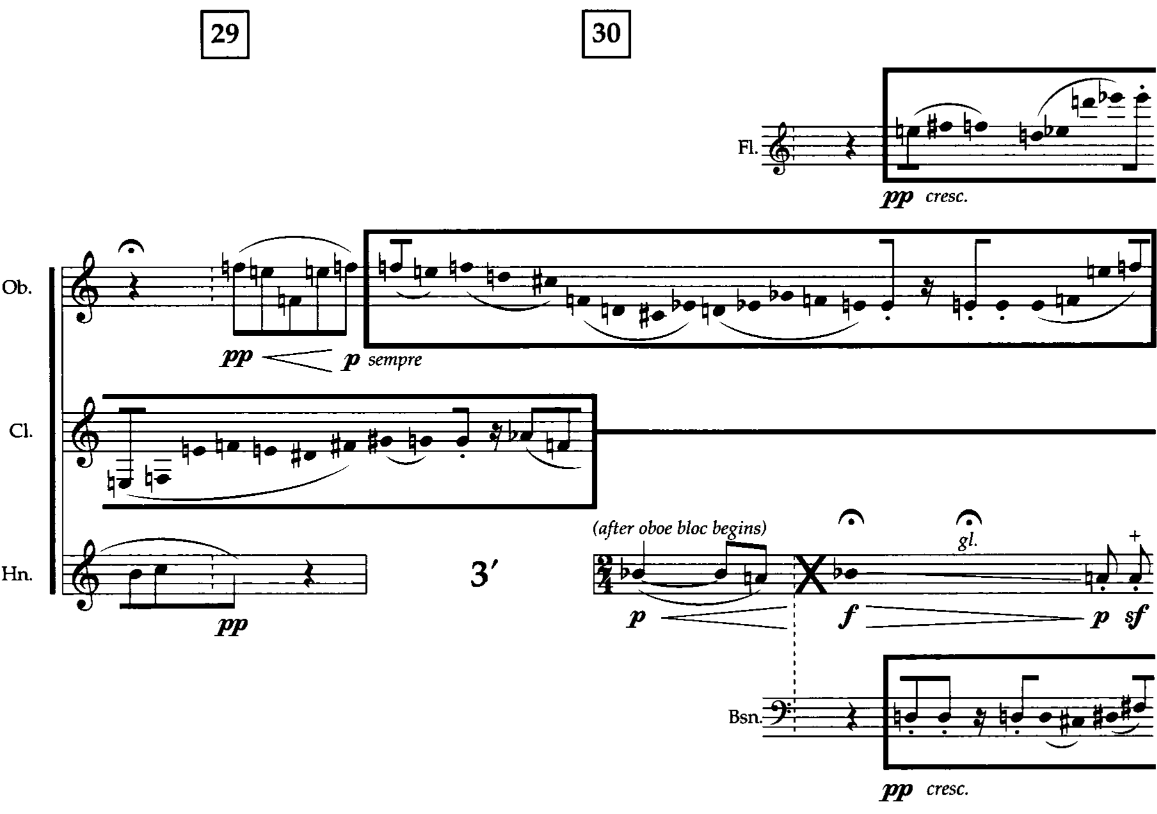

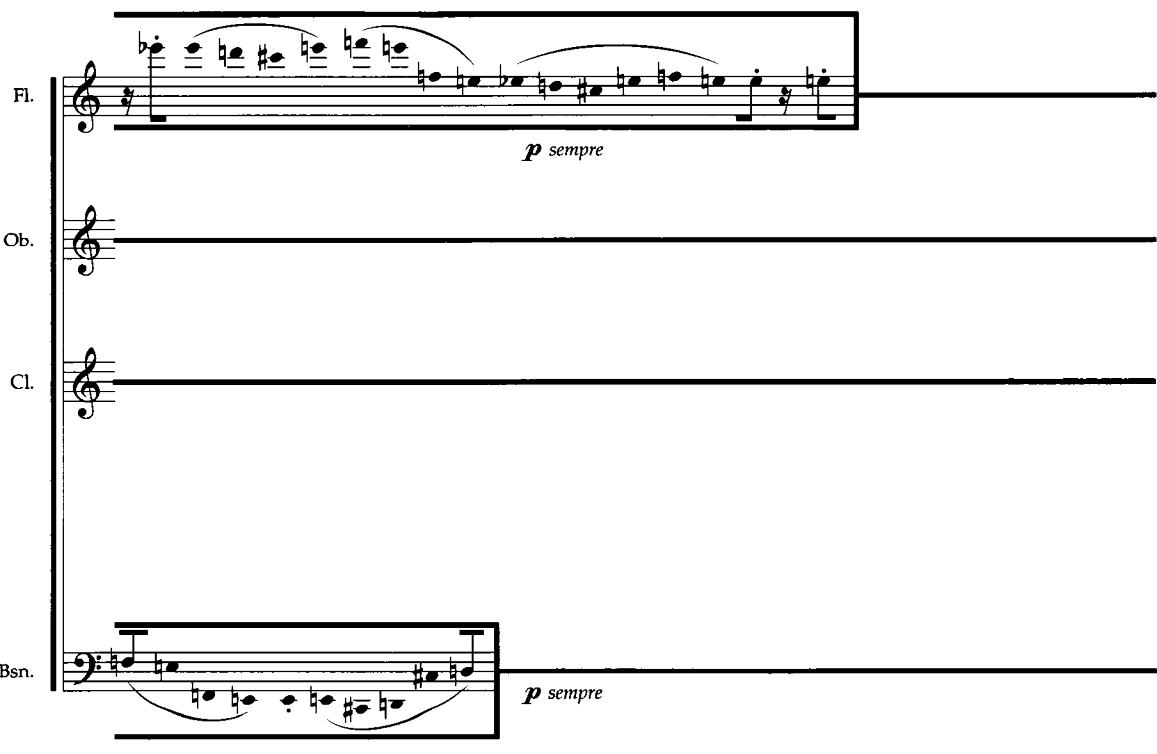

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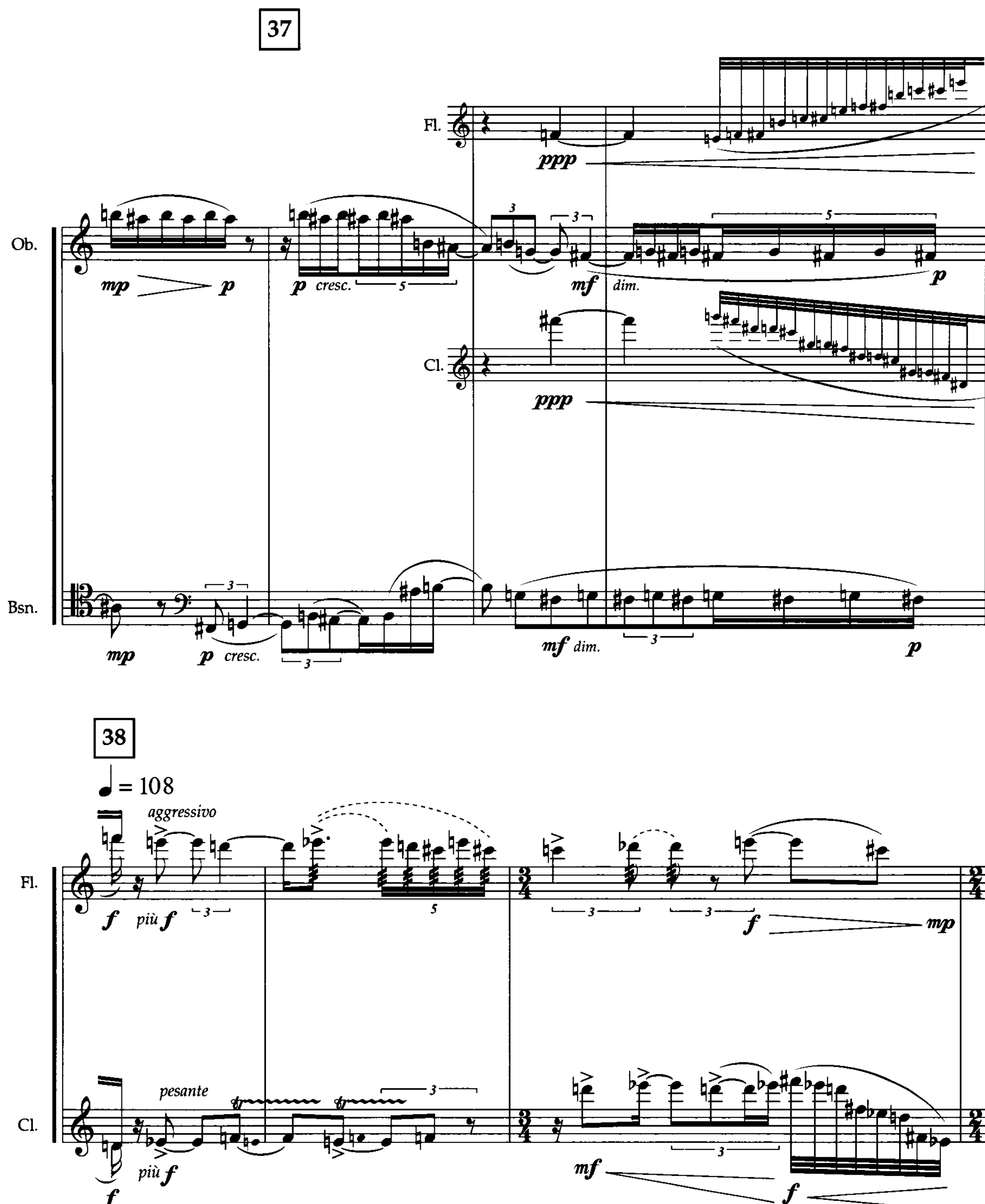

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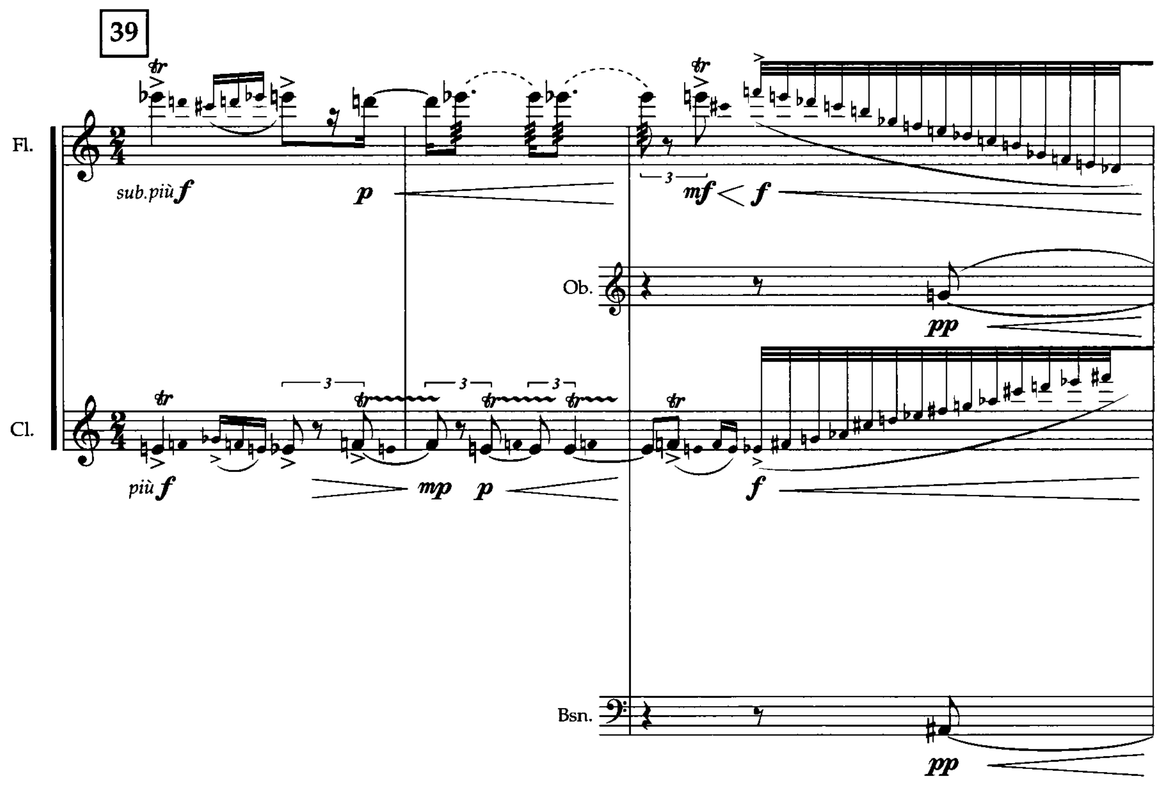

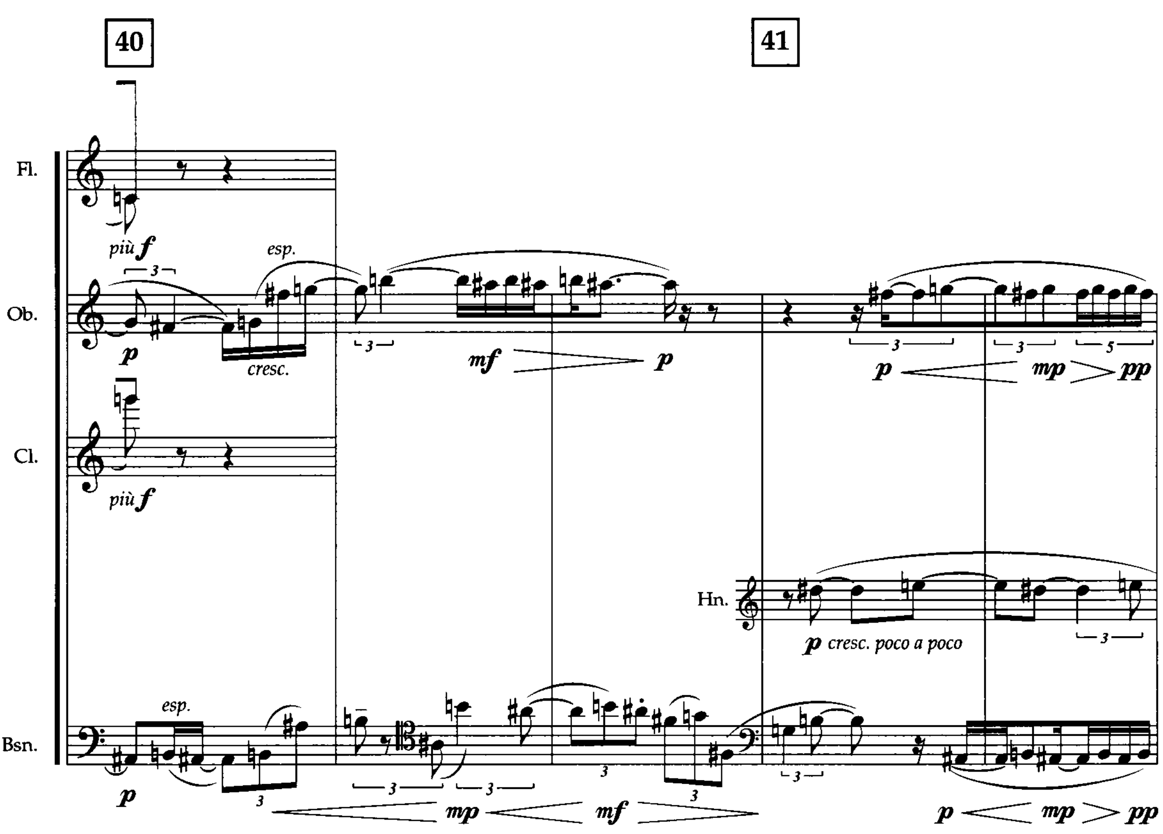

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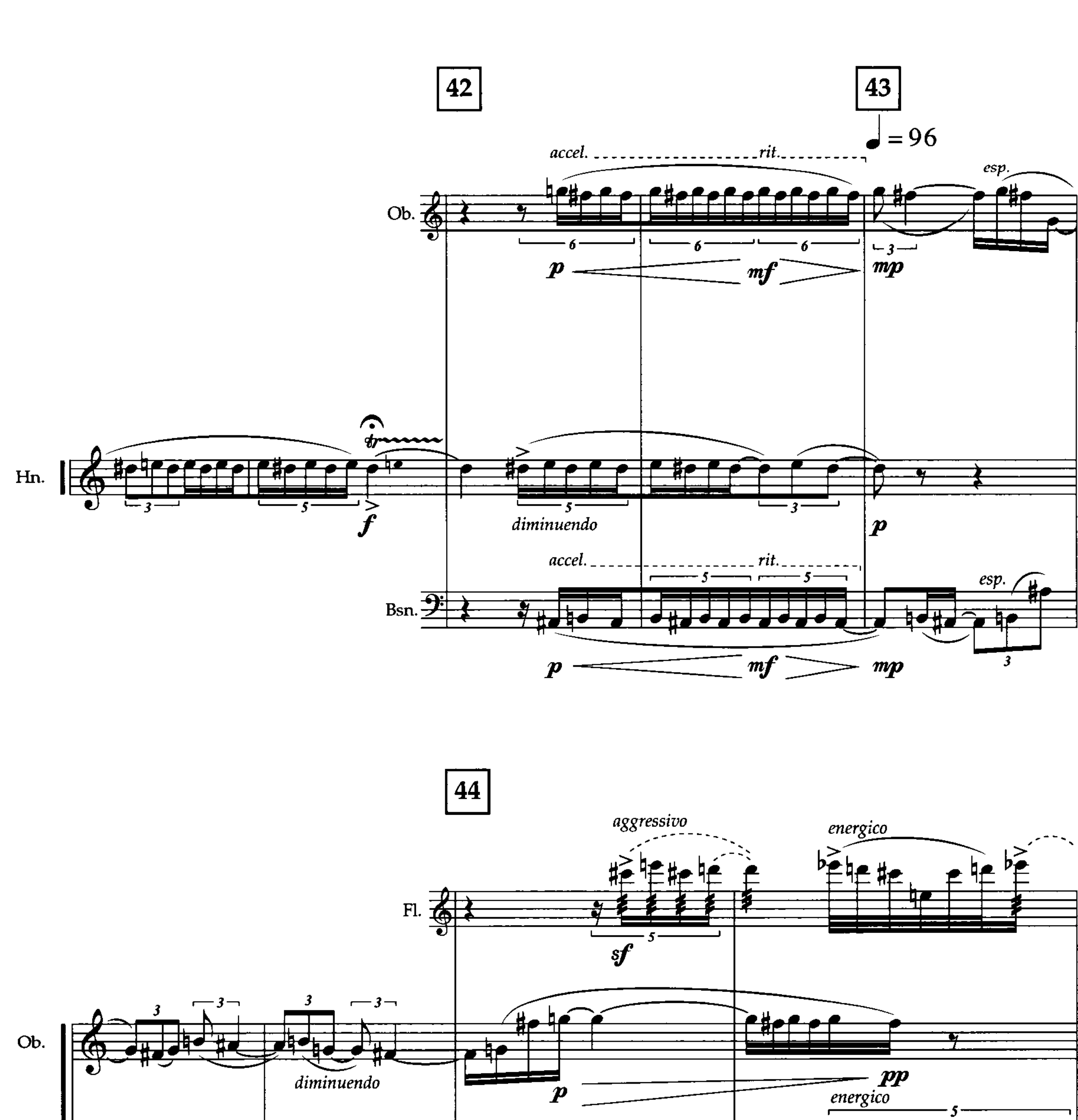

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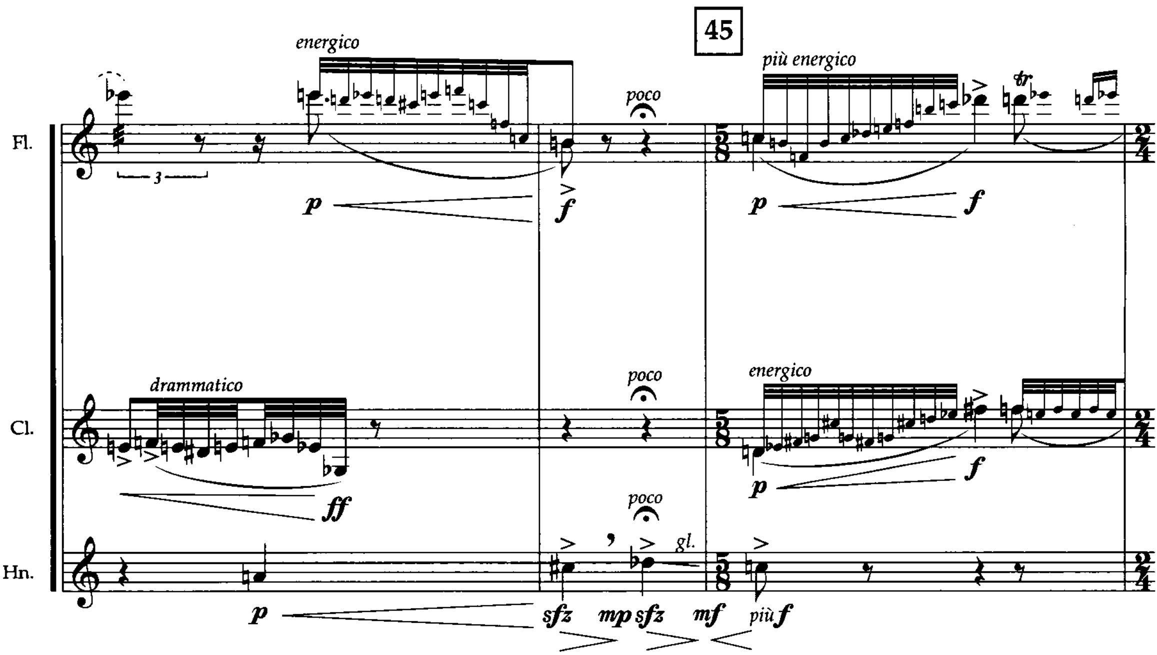

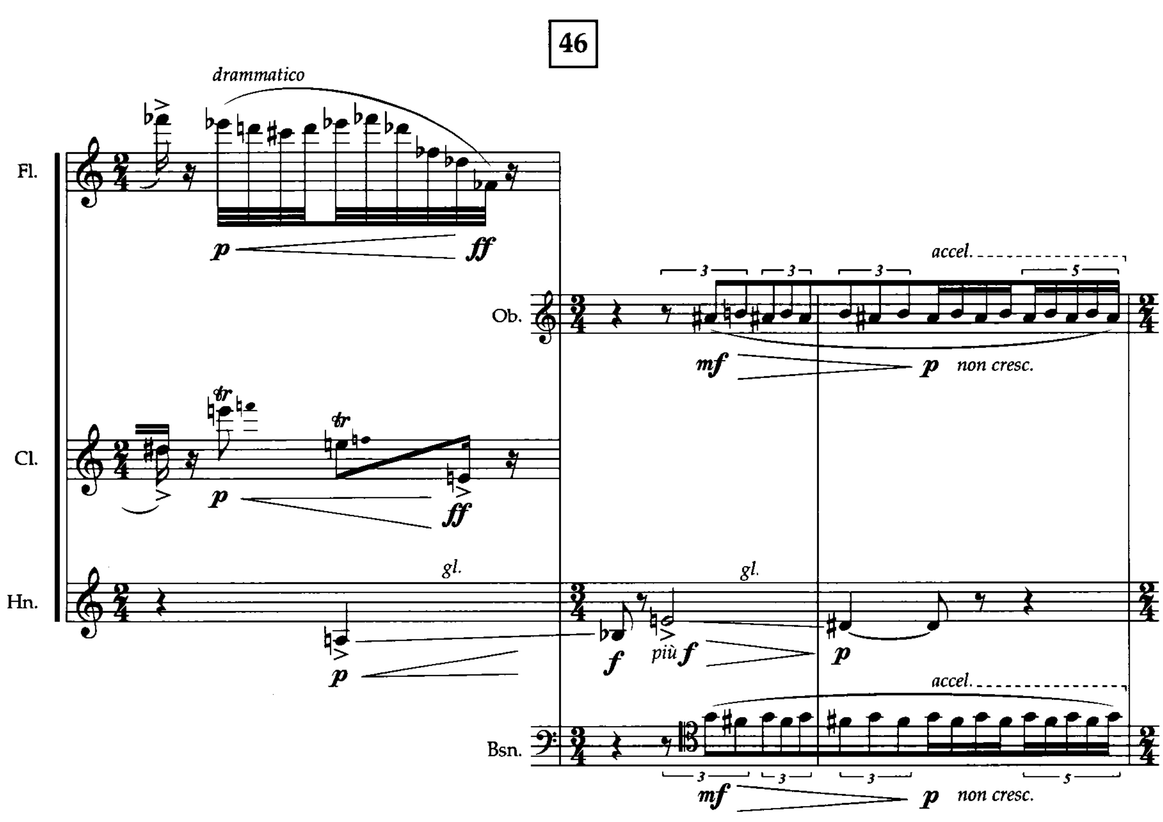

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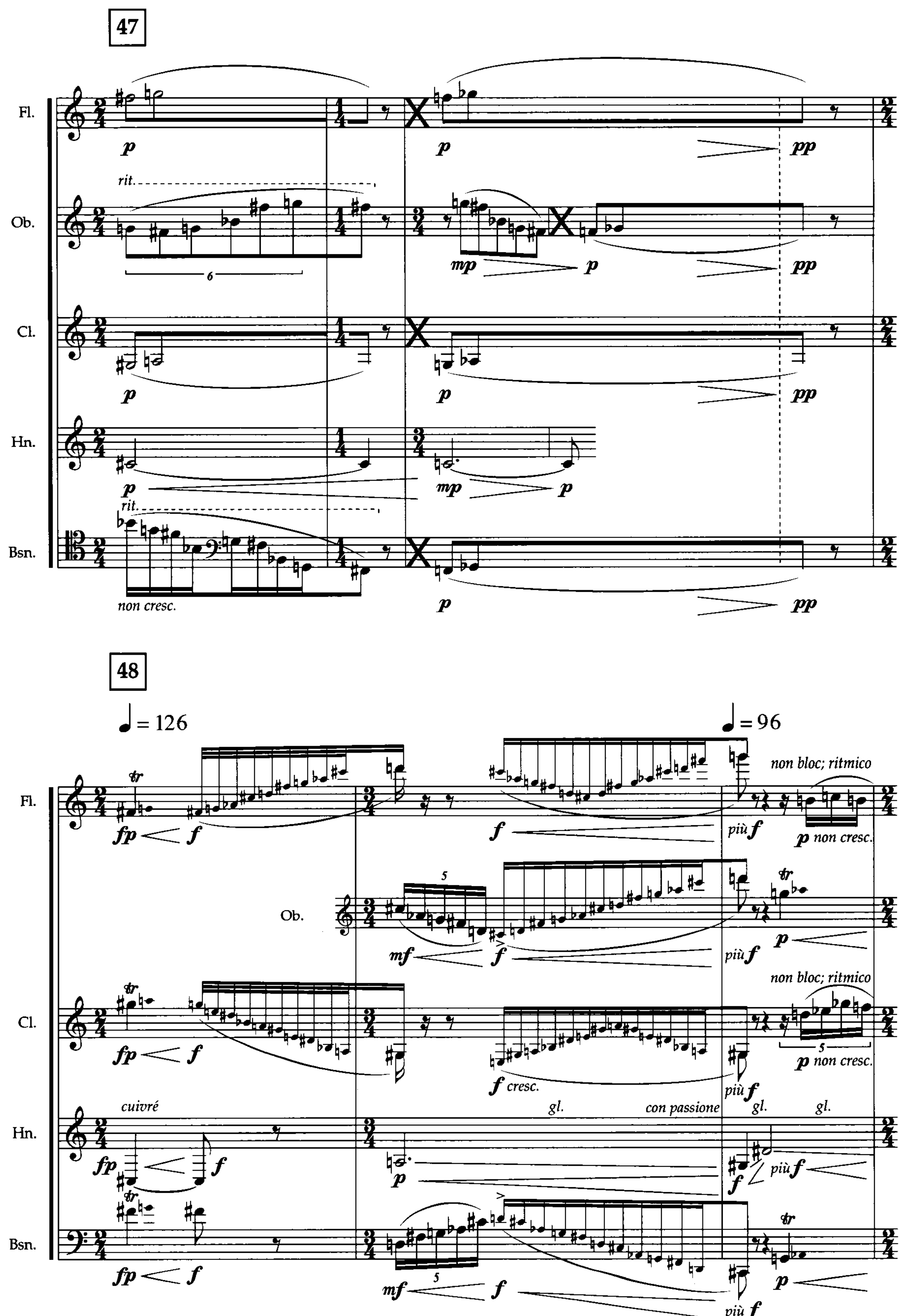

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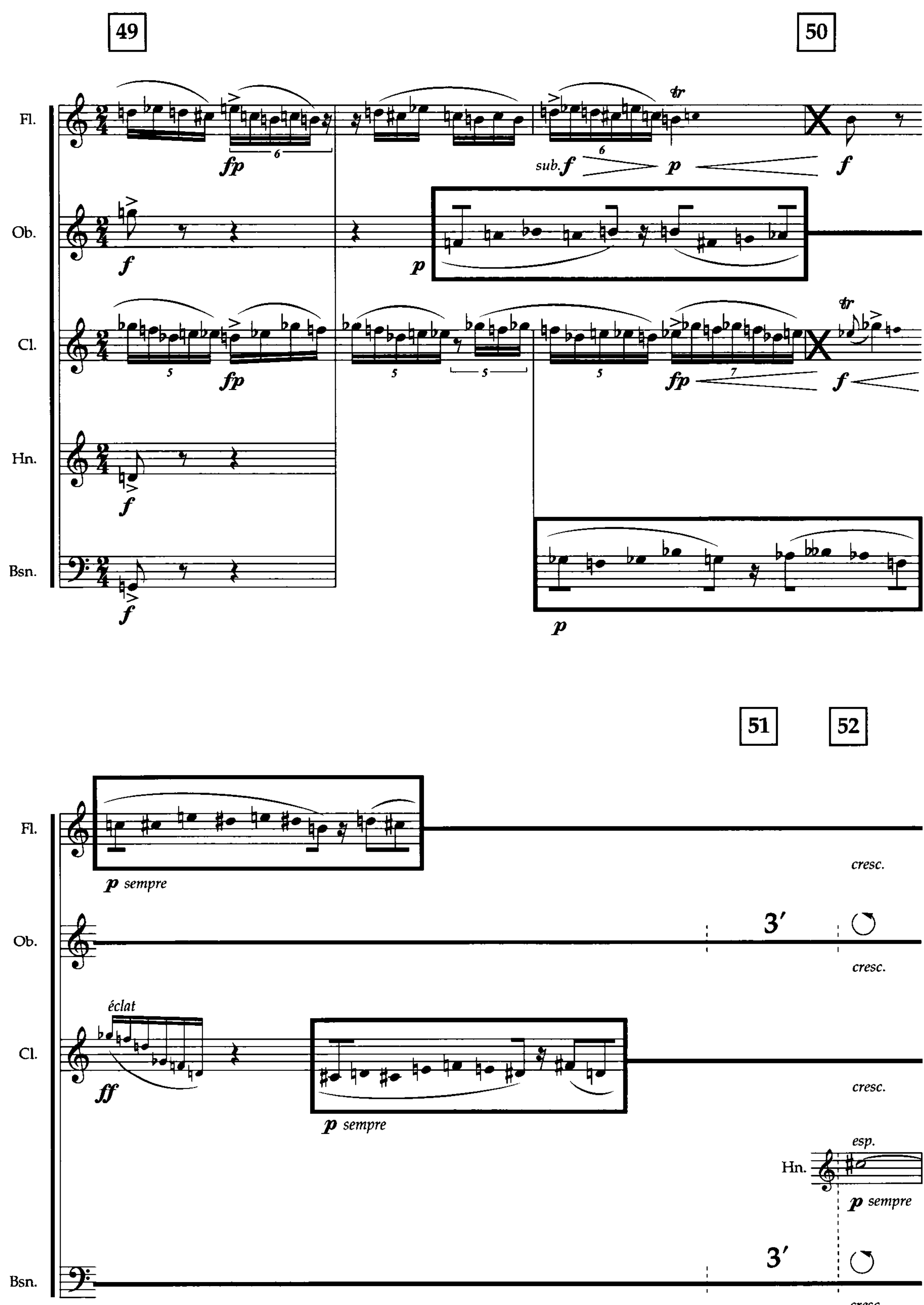

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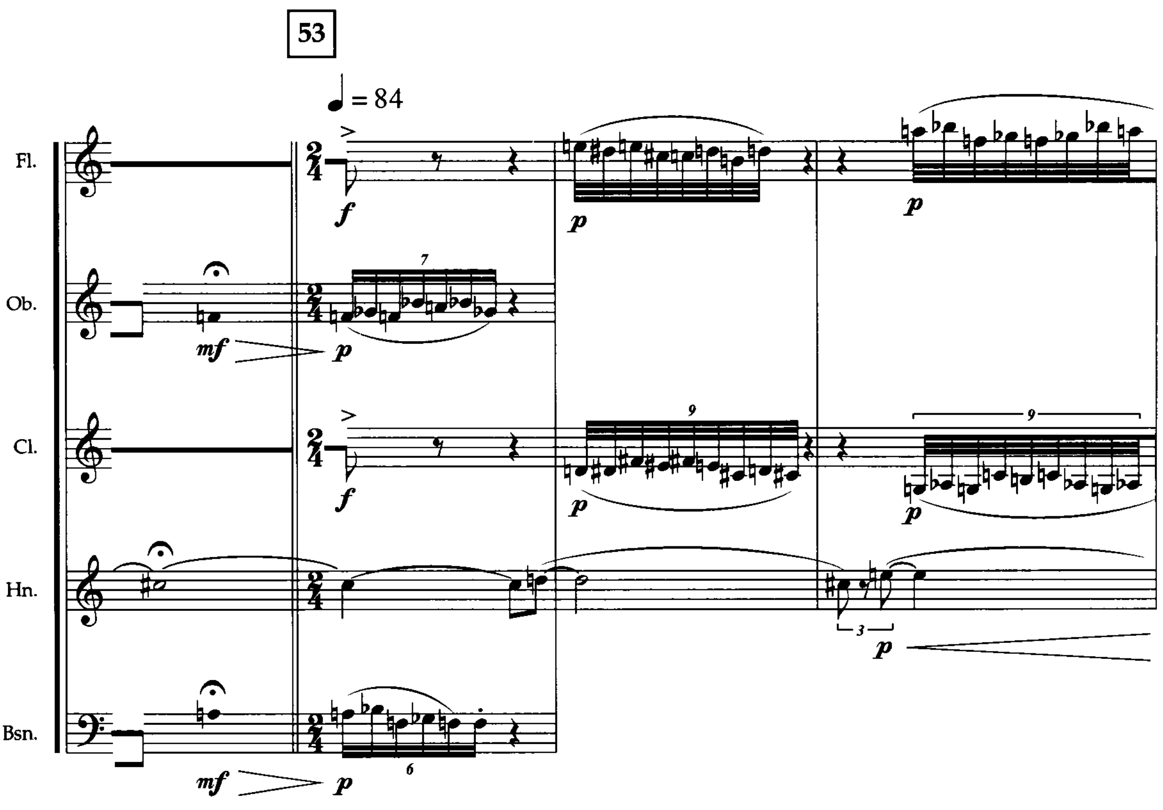

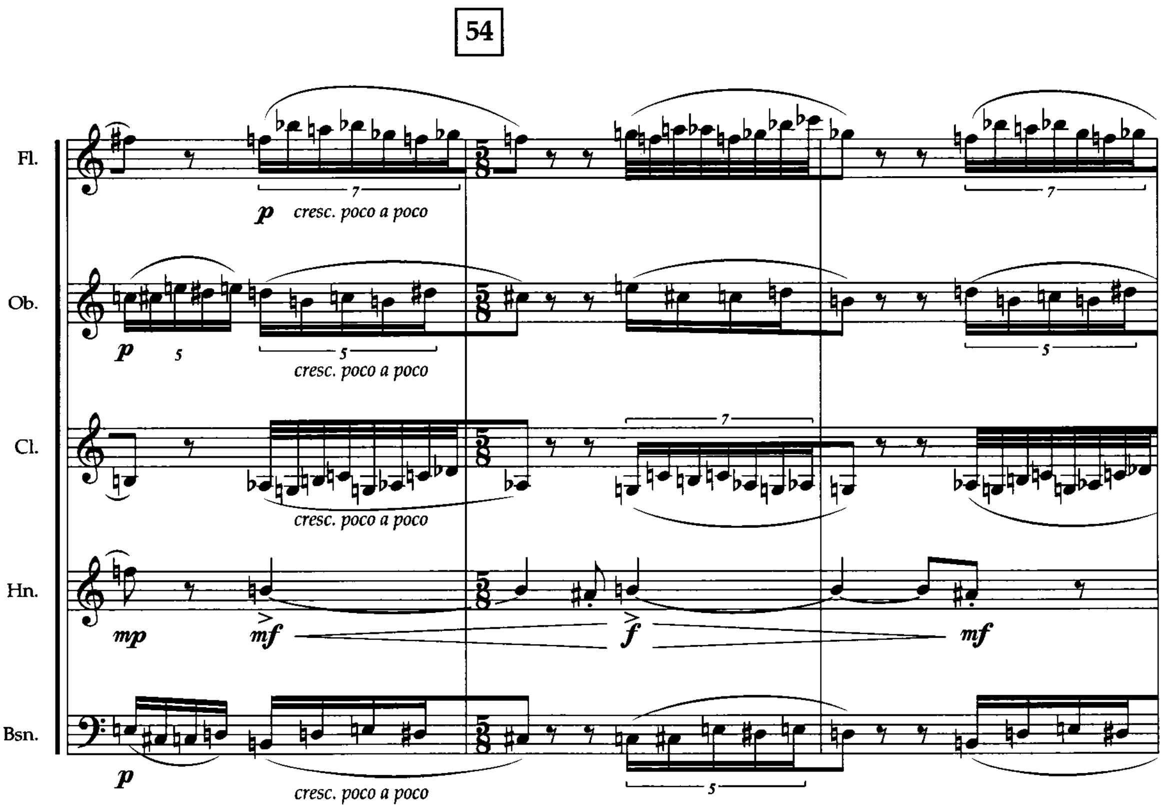

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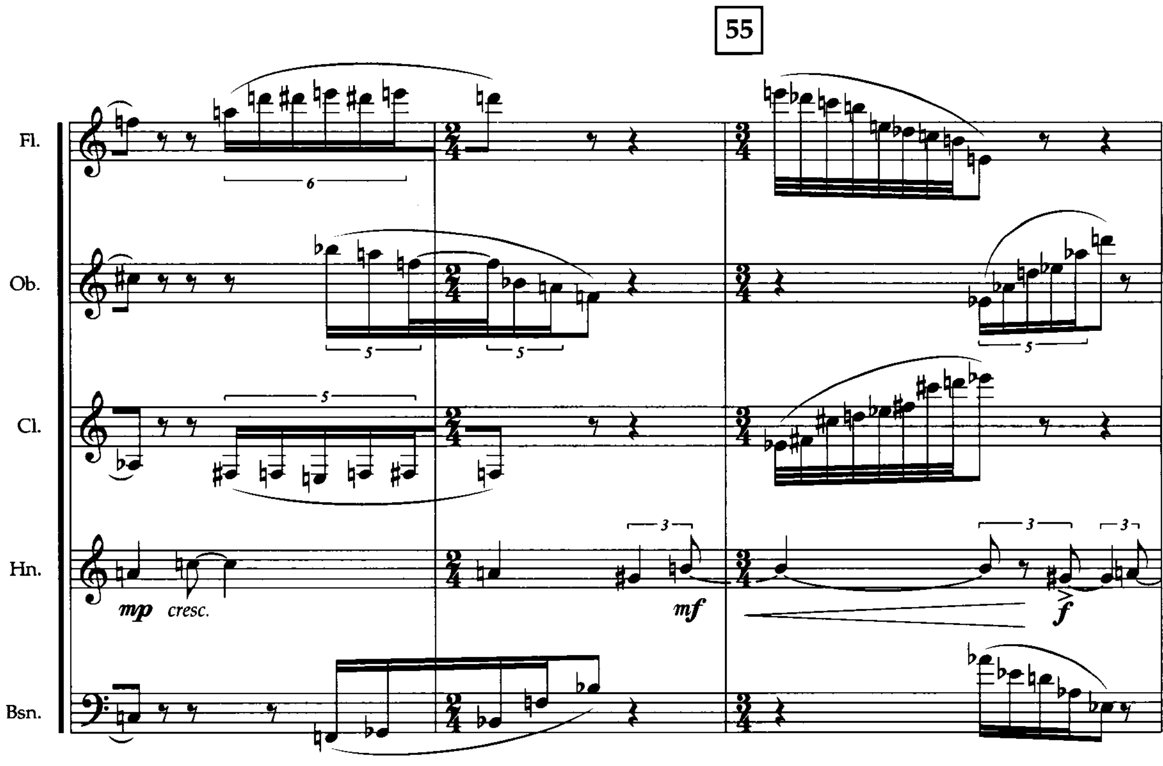

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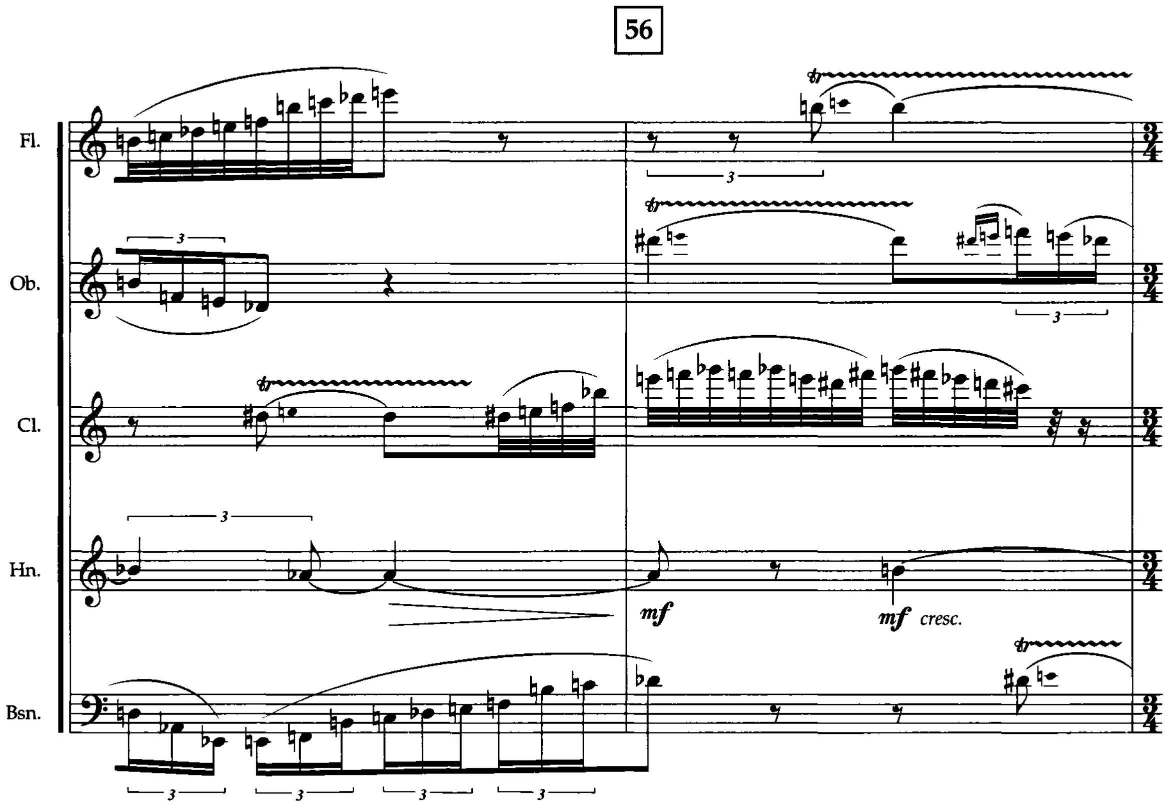

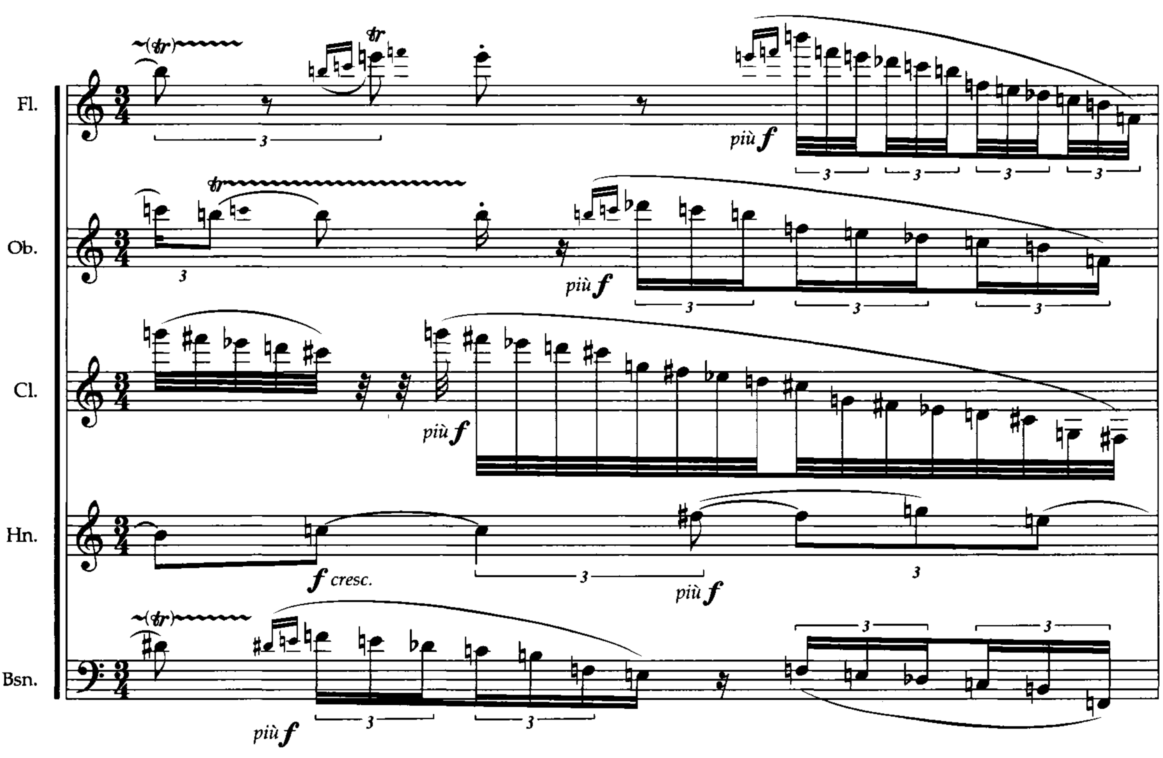

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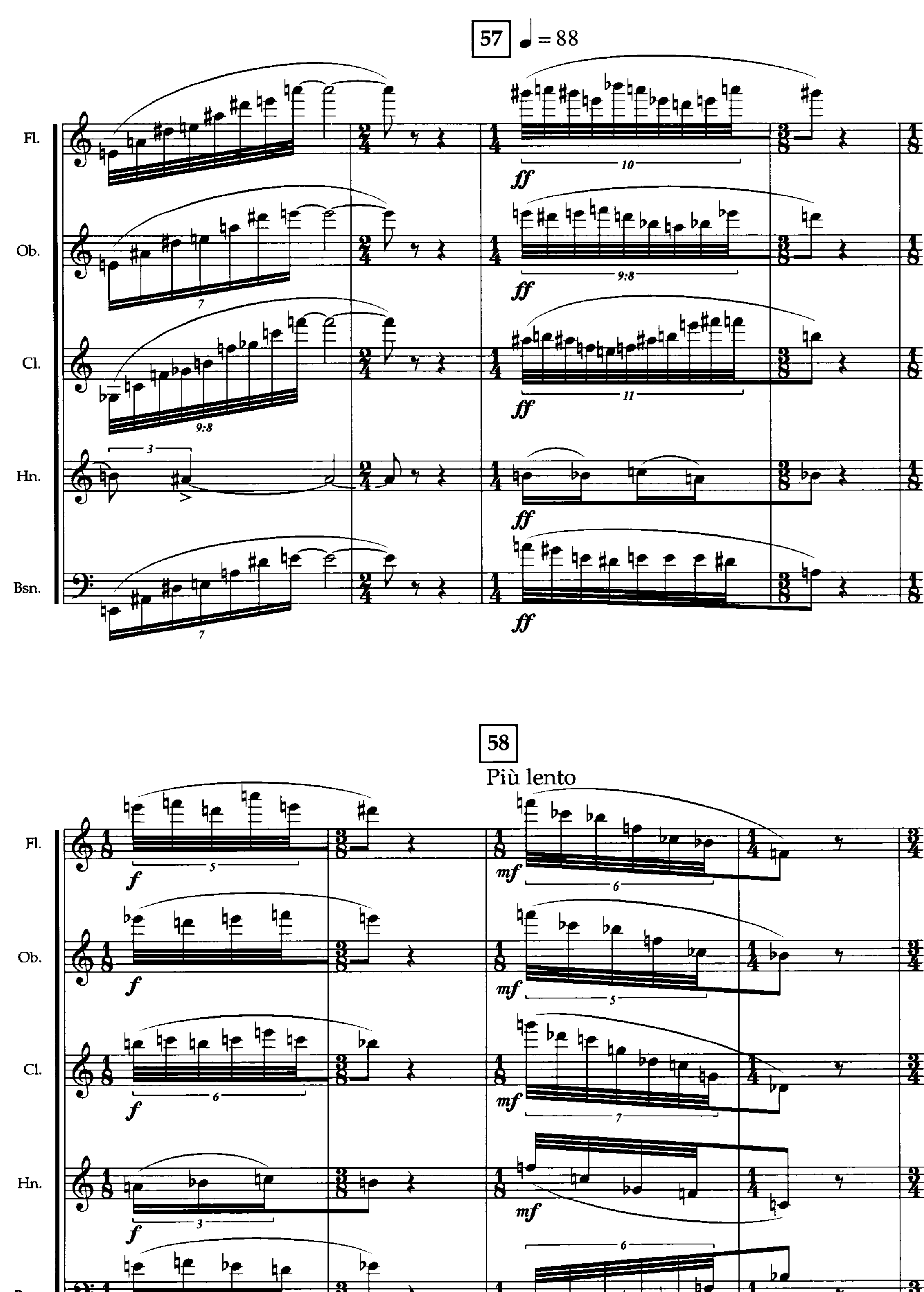

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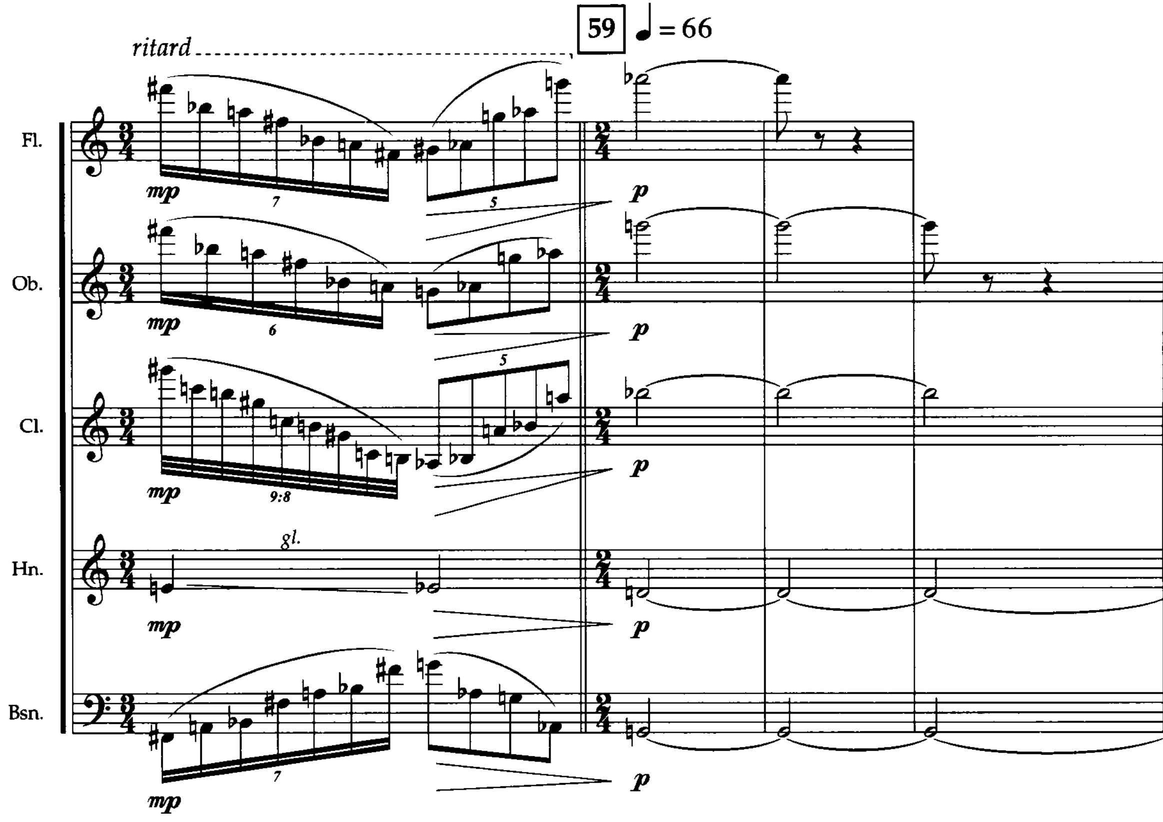

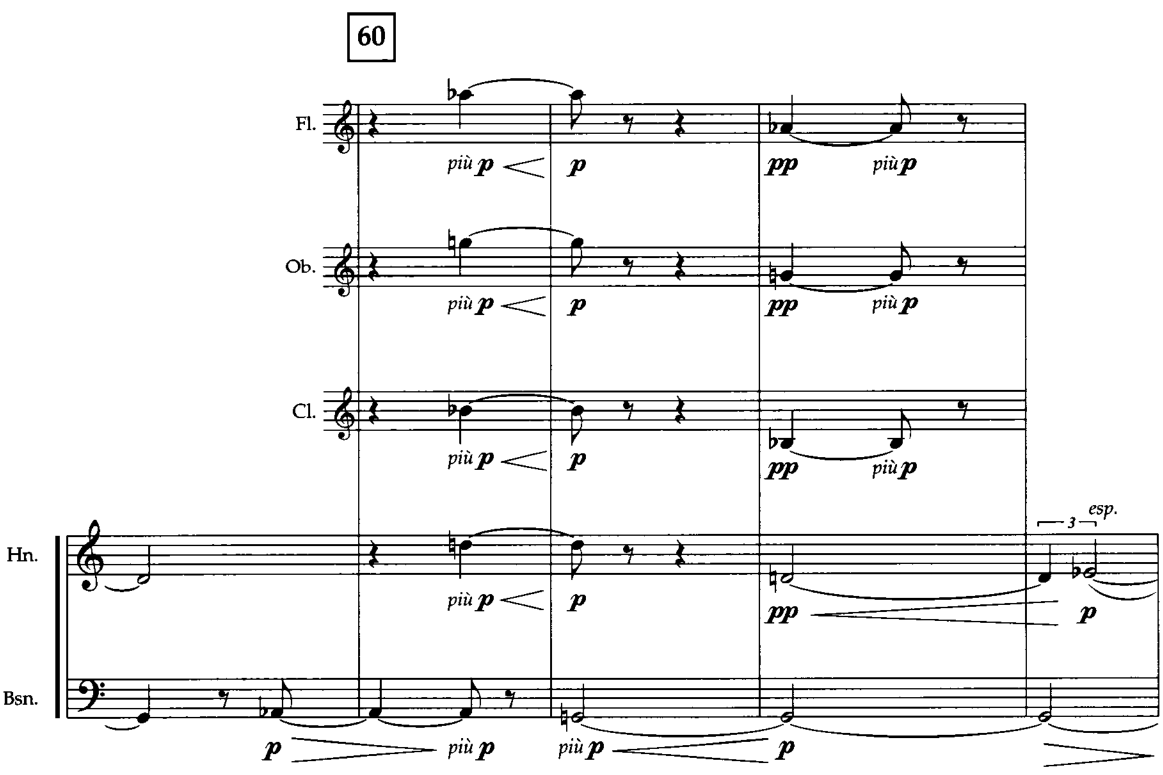

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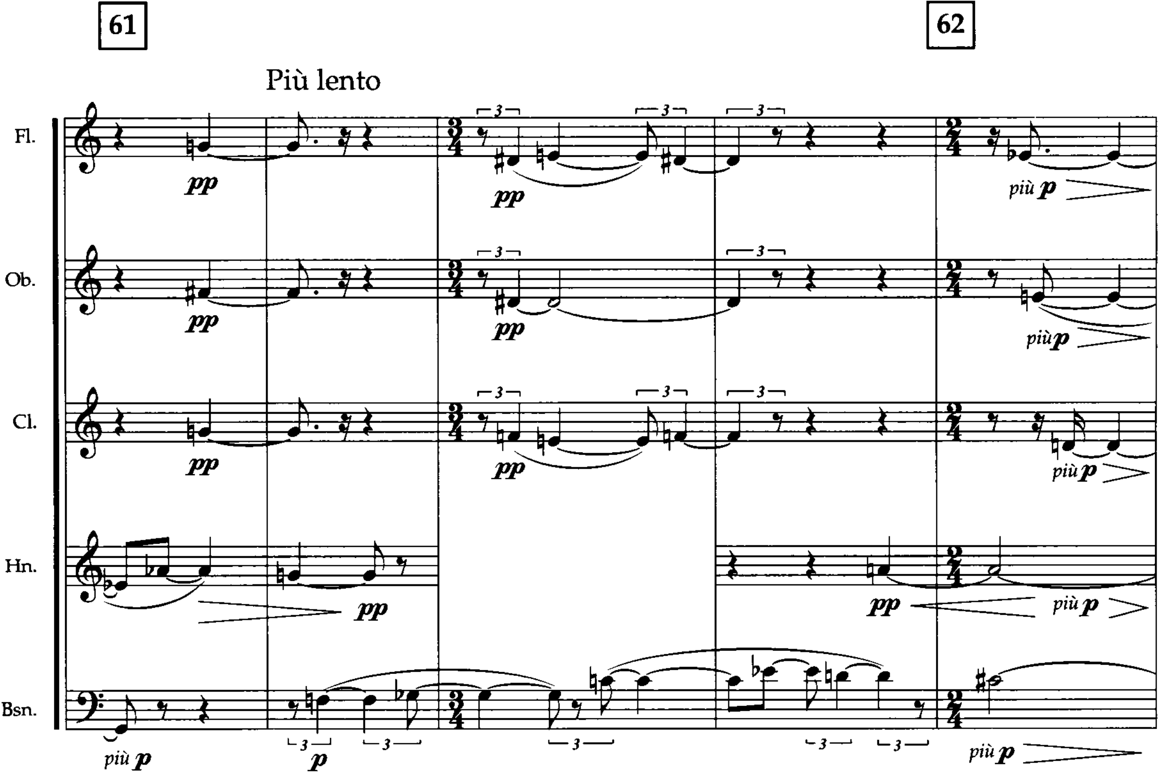

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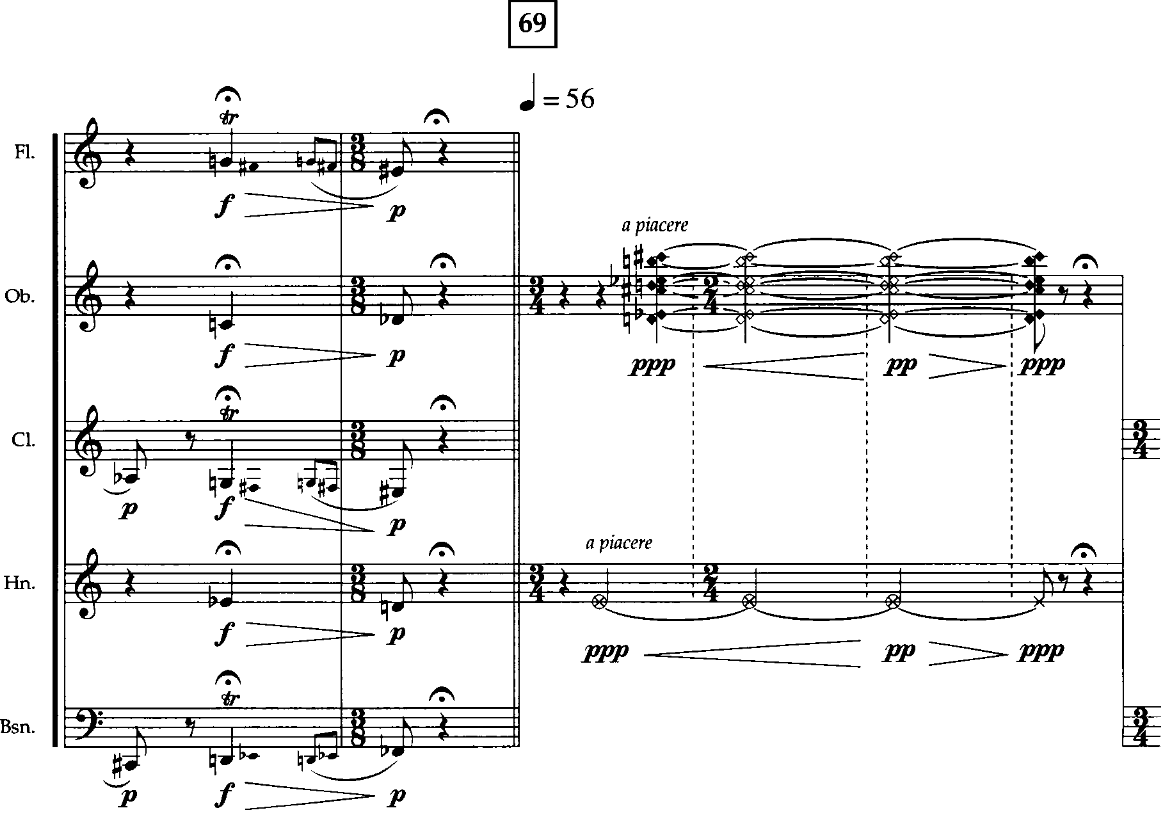

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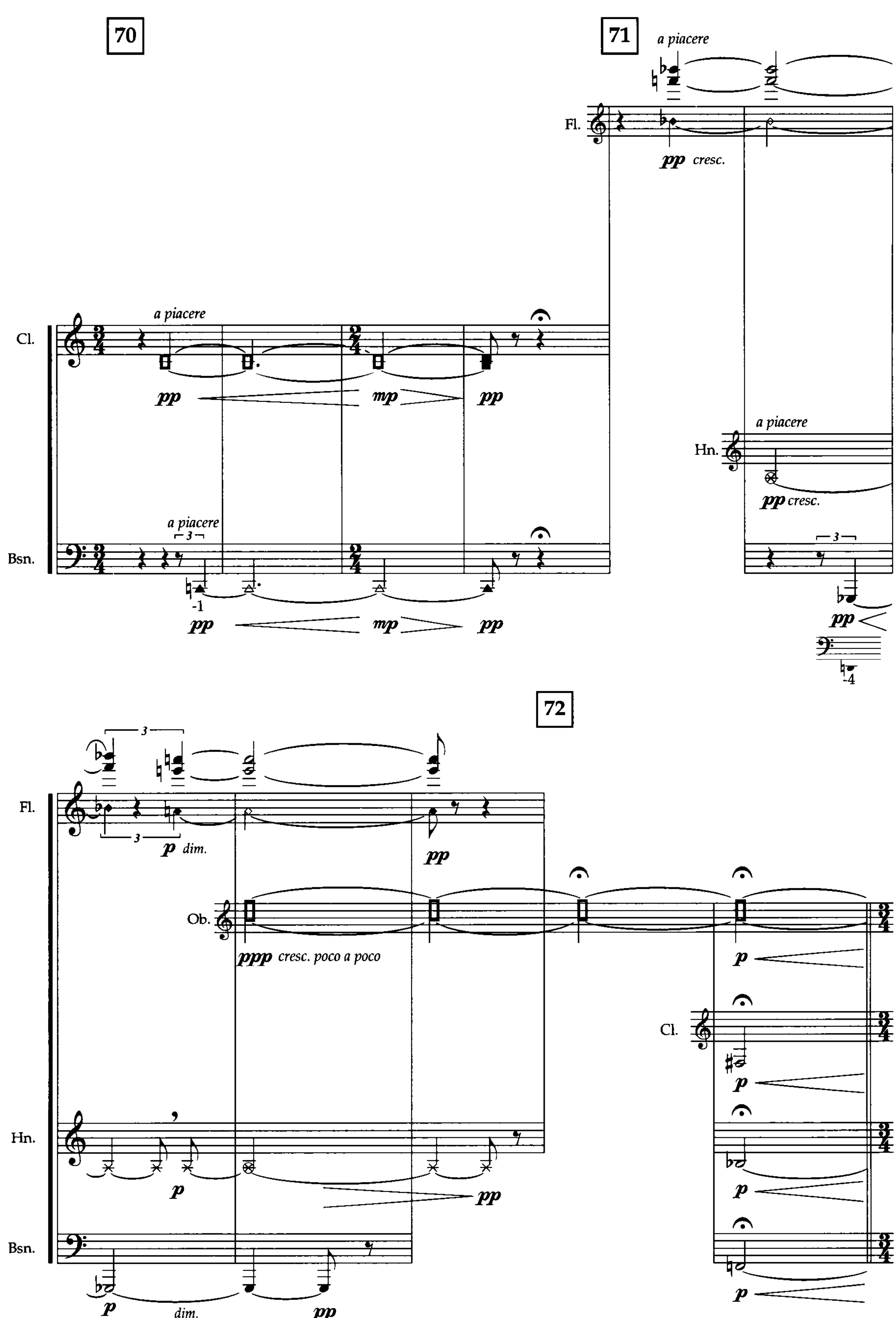

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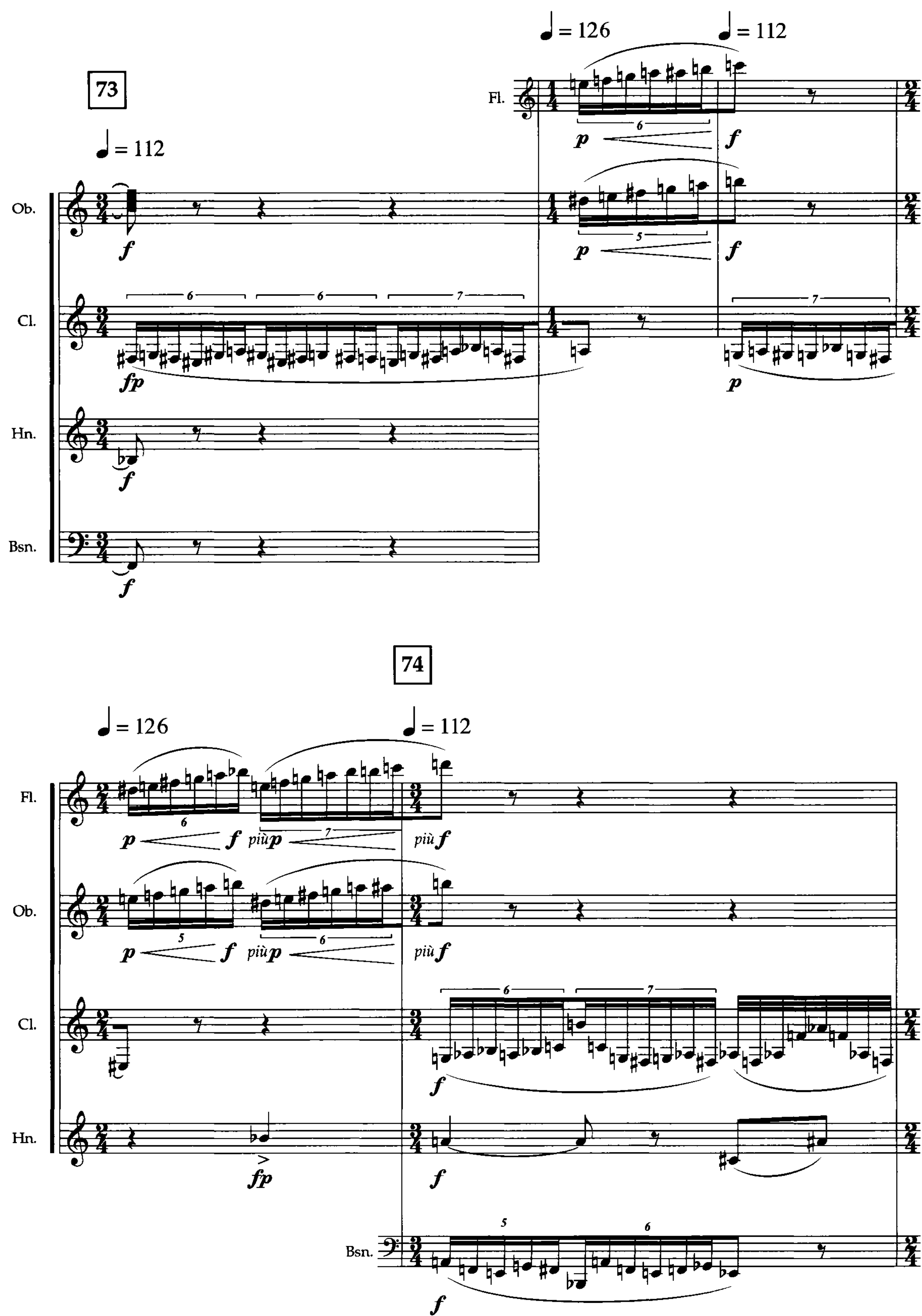

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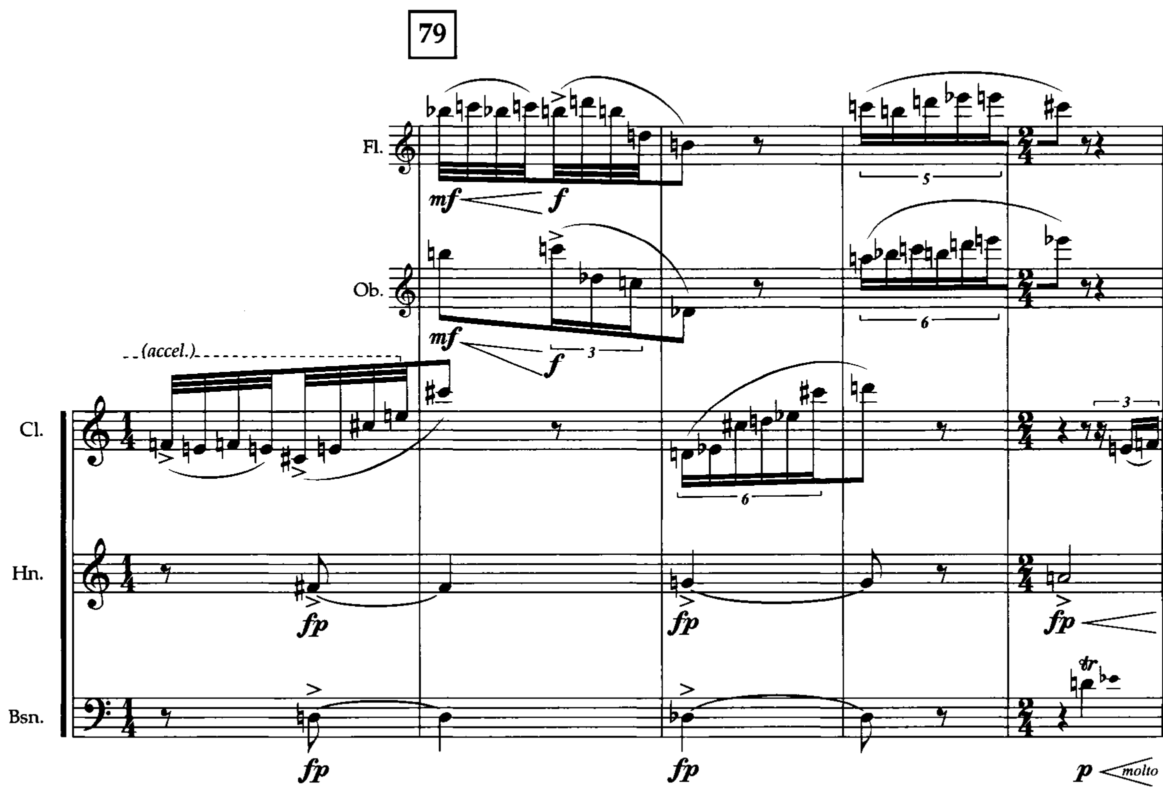

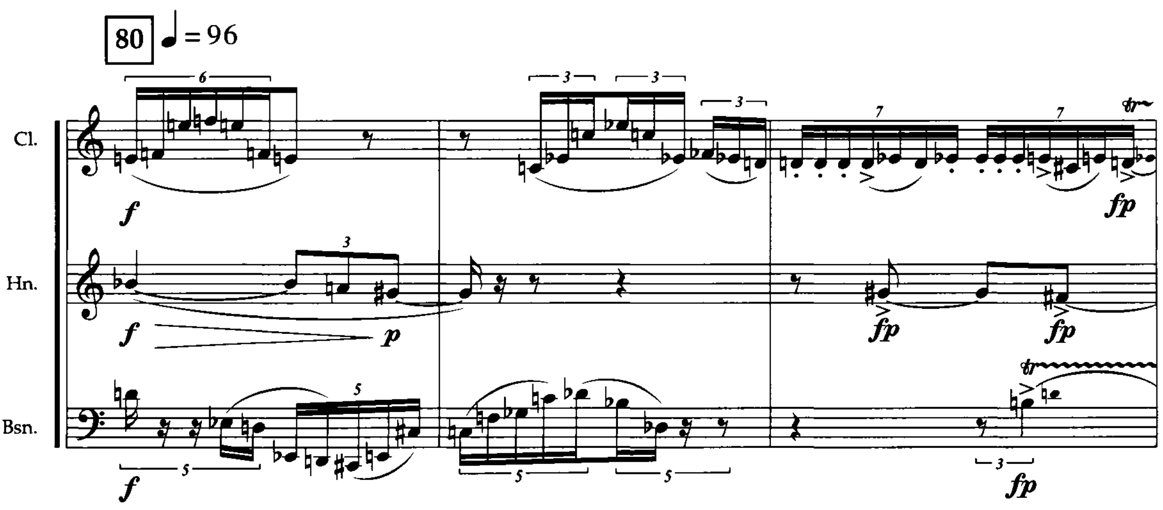

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81

Più lento; en bloc

Fl.

p sempre

Più lento; en bloc

Ob.

p sempre

Cl.

f

fp

Hn.

mp

gl.

(son d'écho)

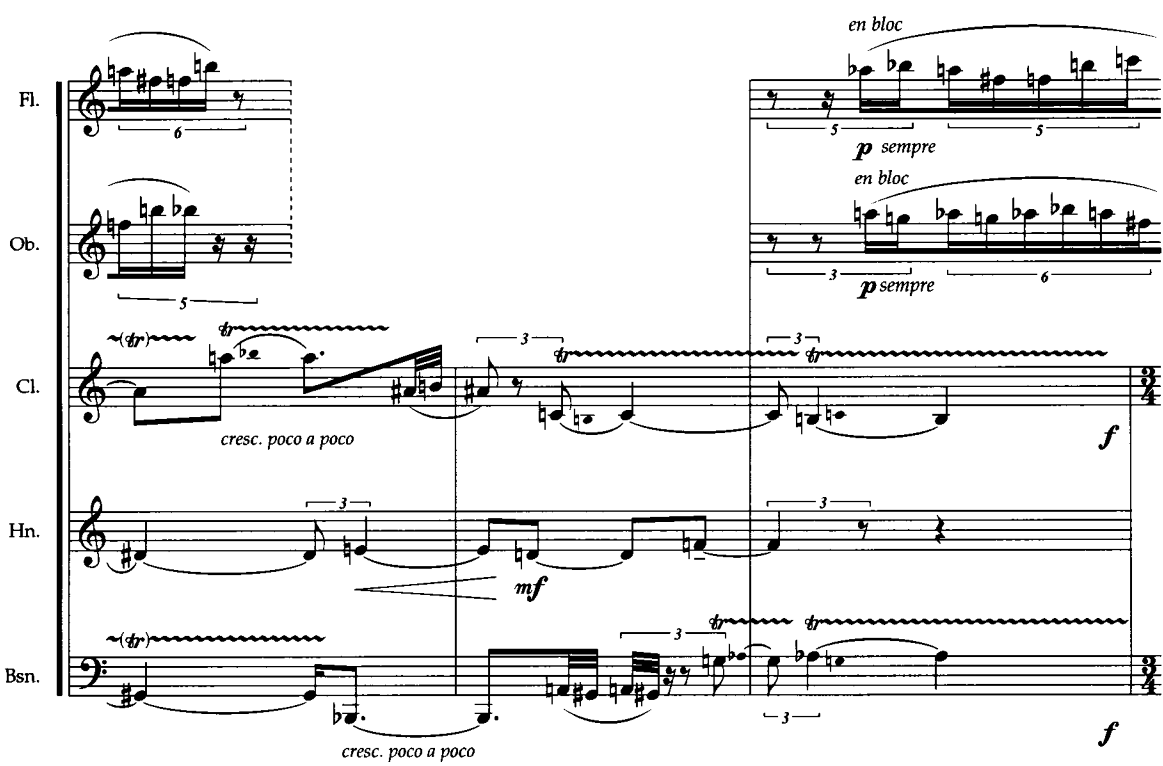
p *p*

fp

Bsn.

f

fp



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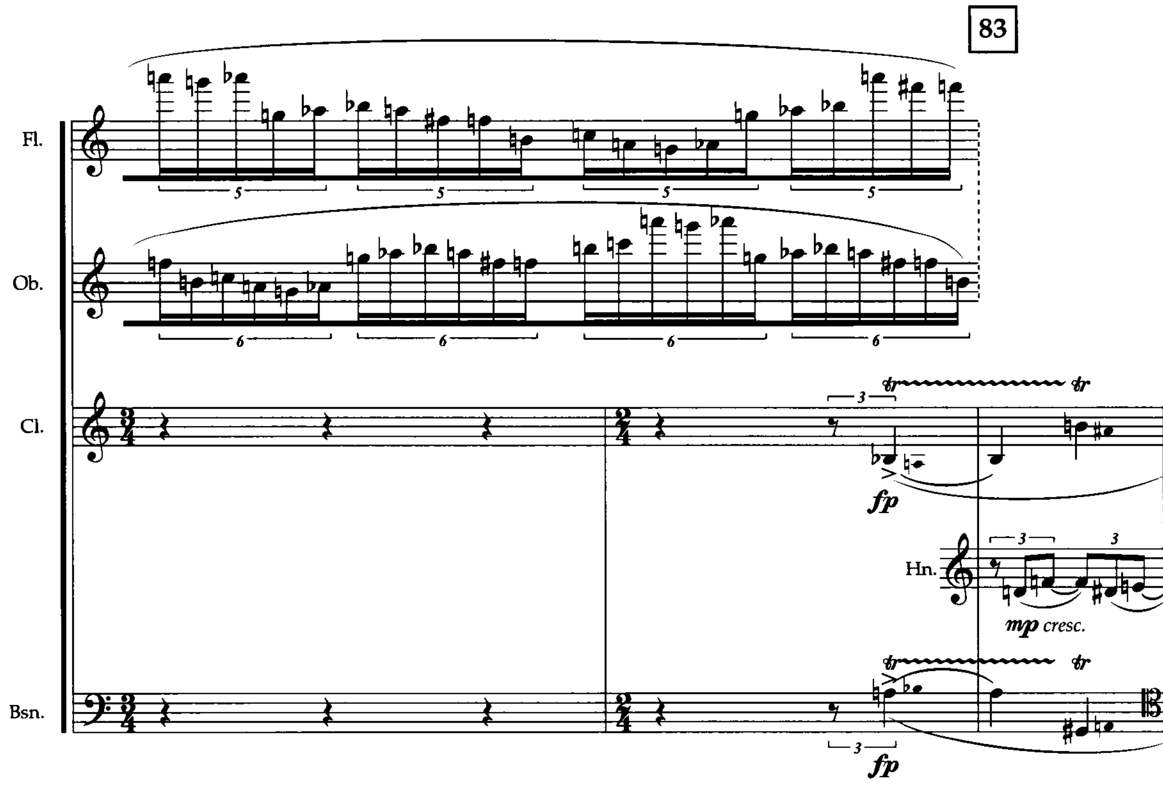

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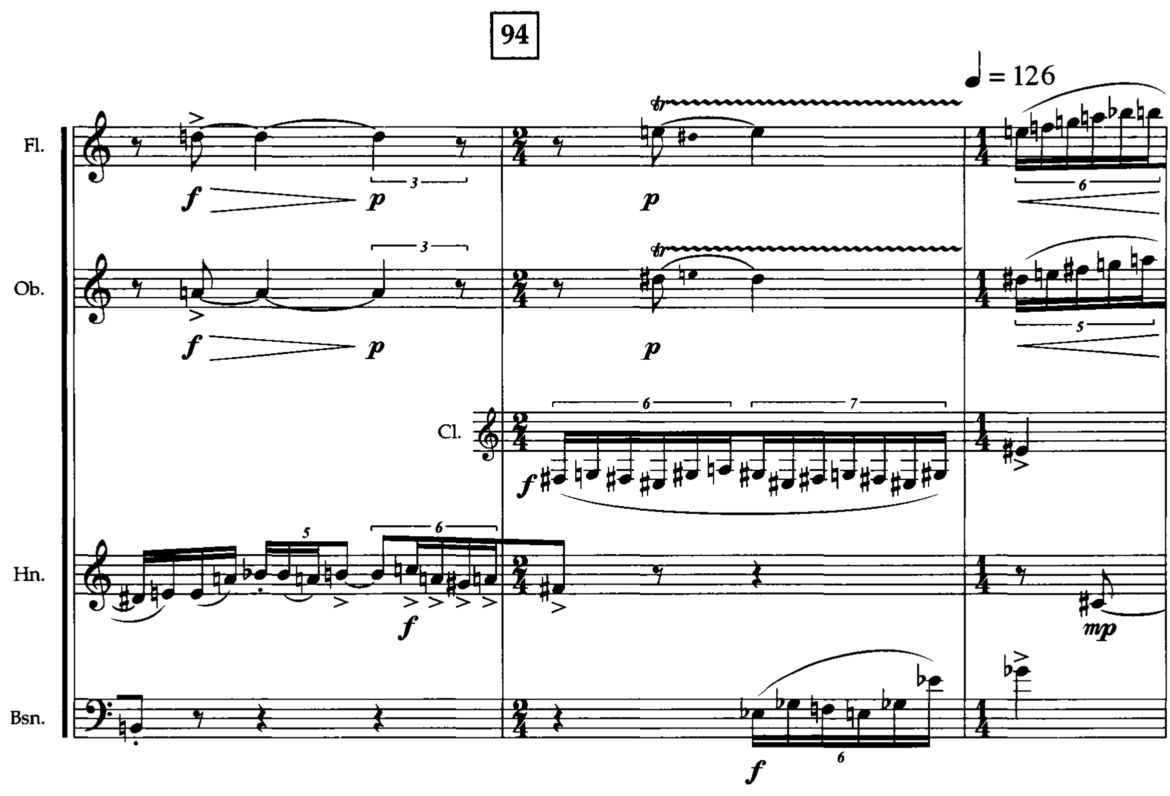

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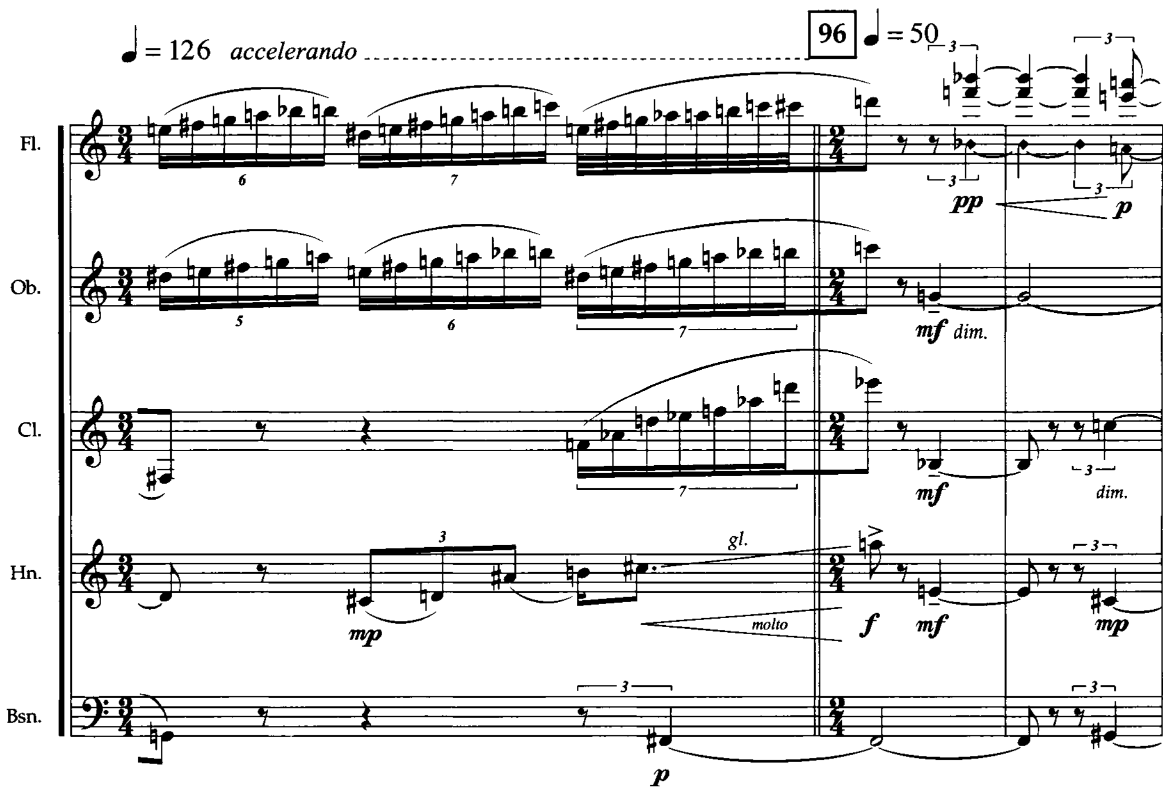

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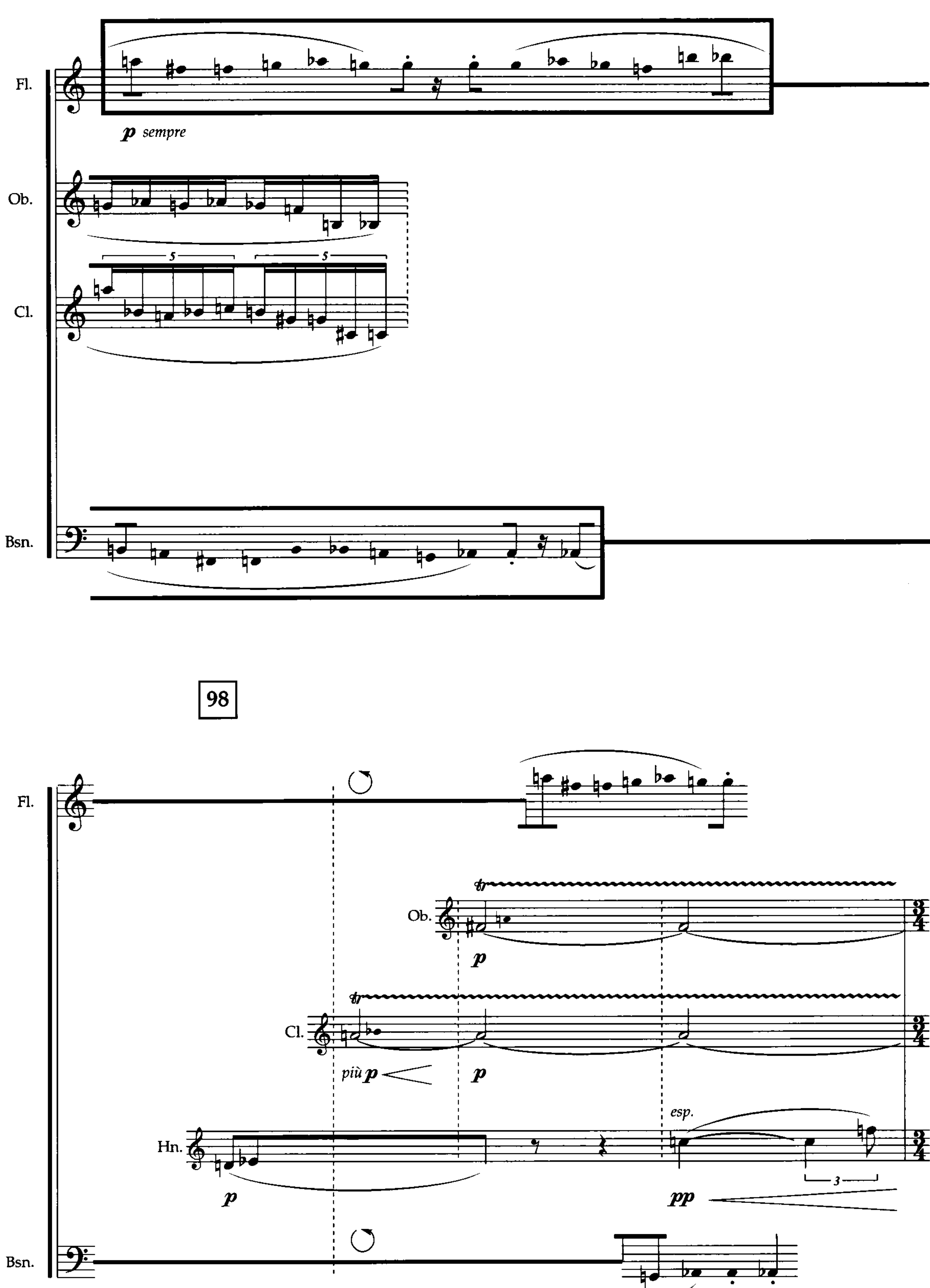

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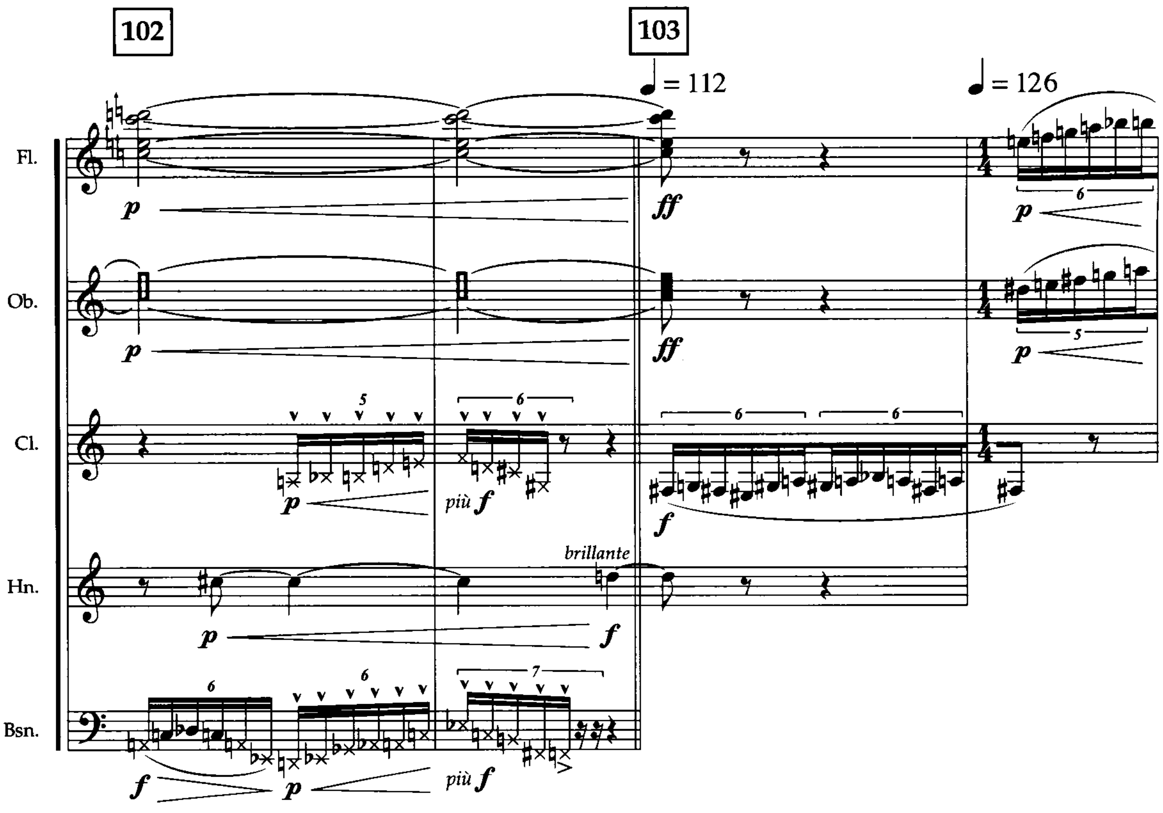

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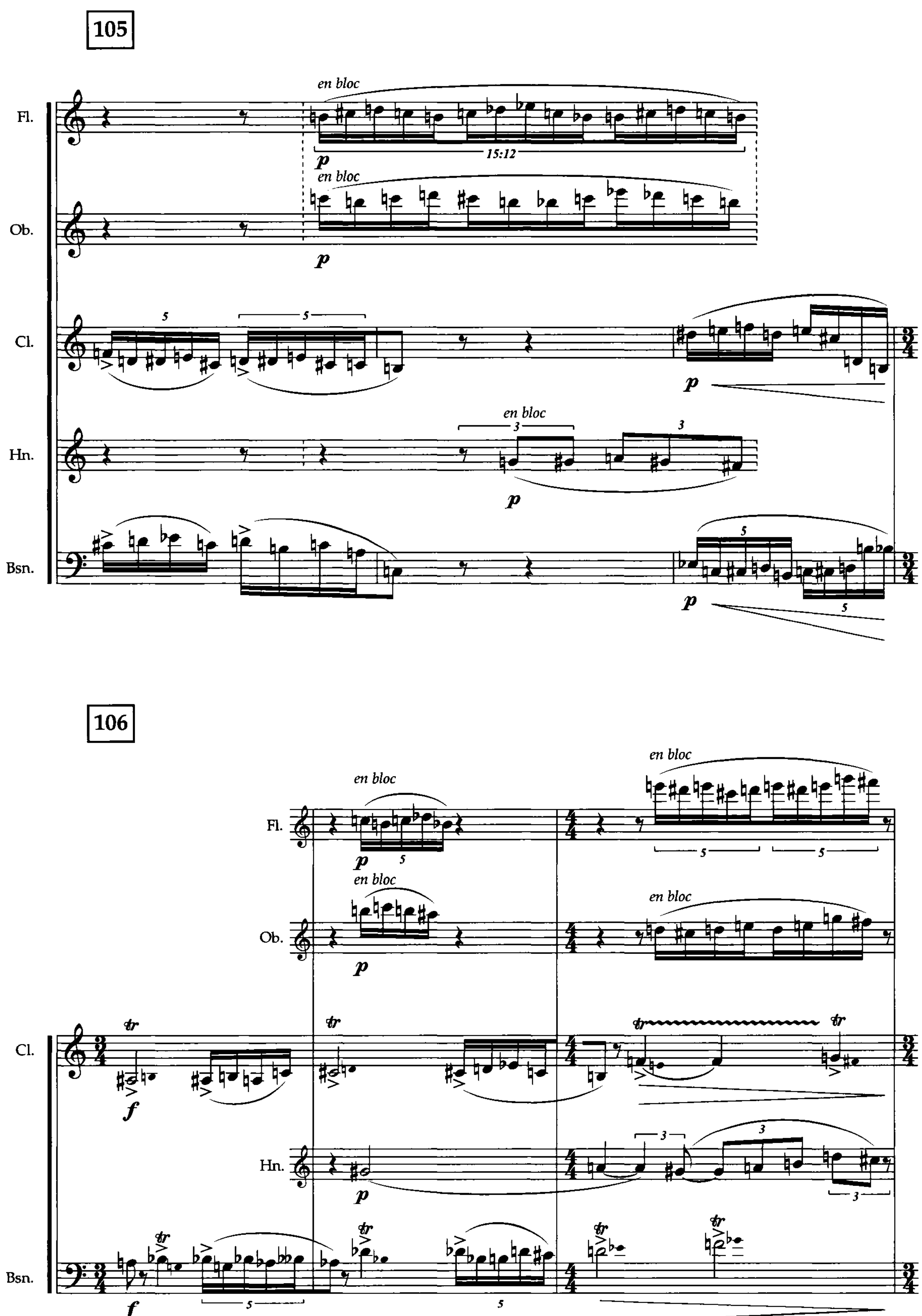

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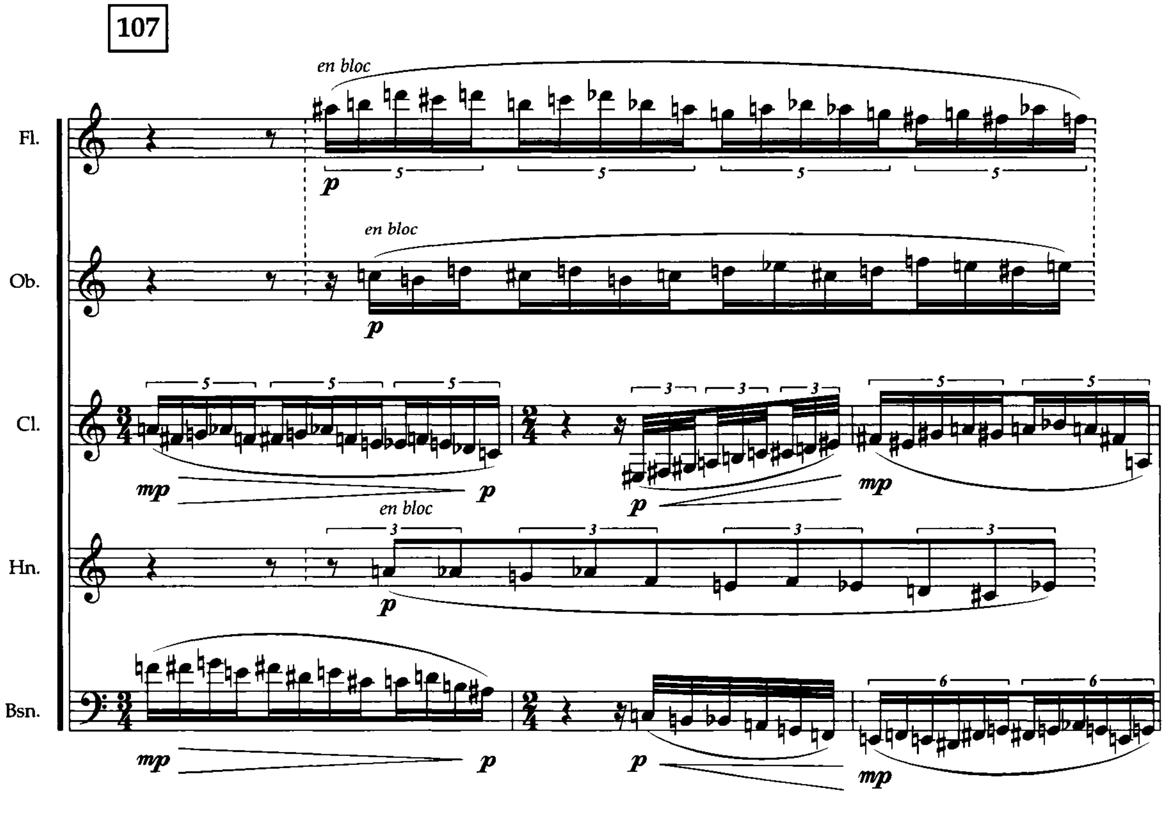

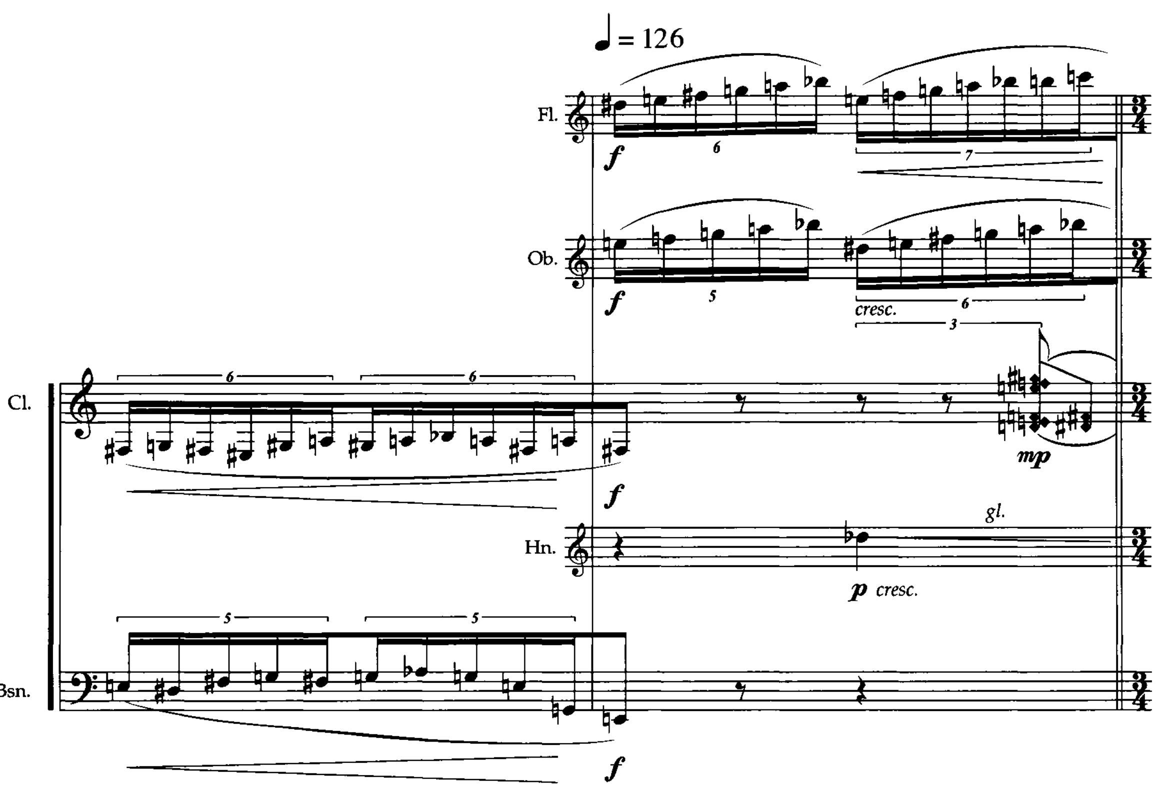

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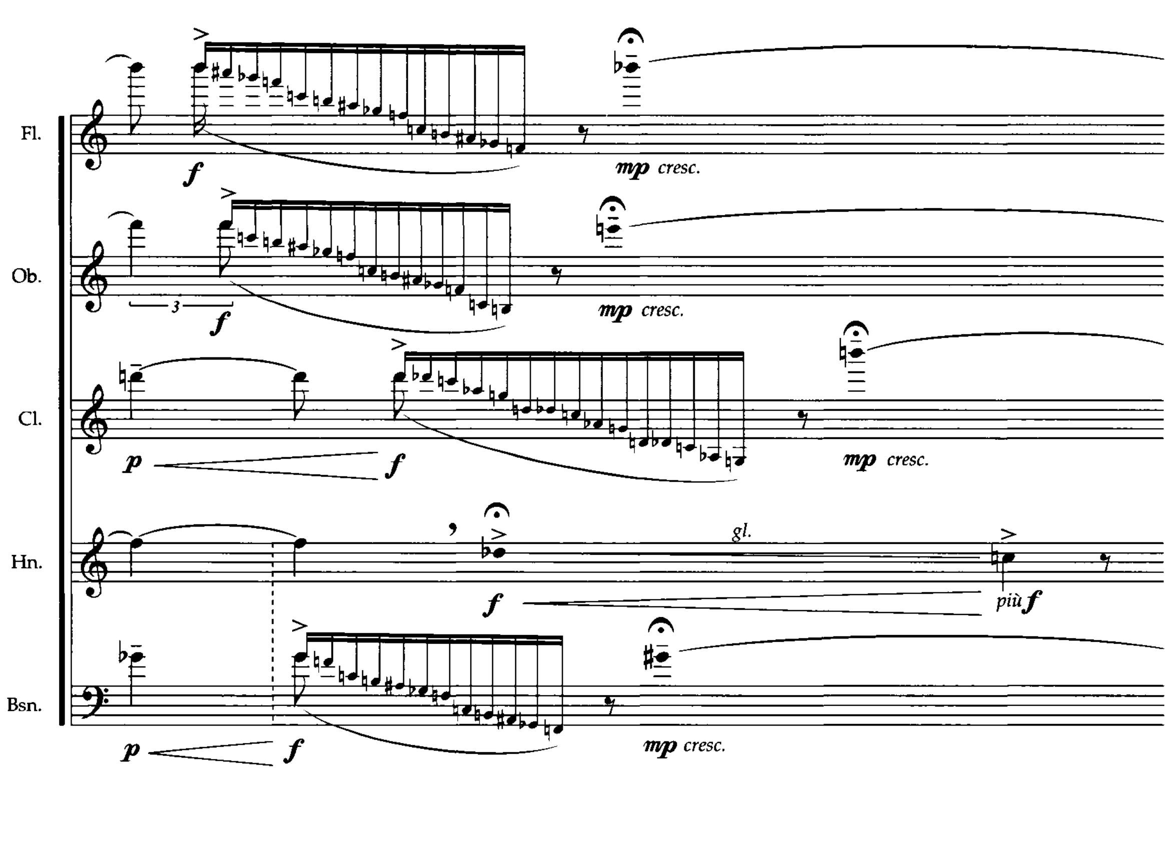

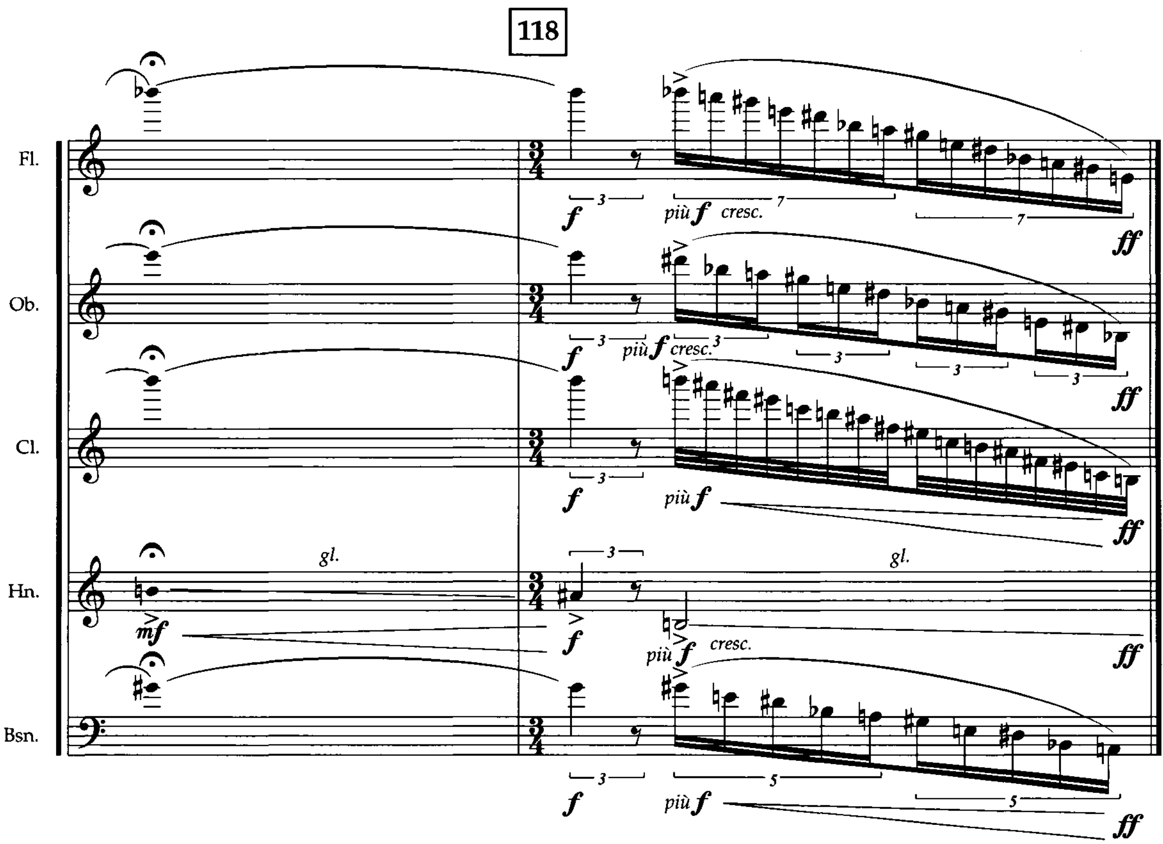

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