TWELVE-TONE WRITING IN THE PIANO MUSIC OF BEN WEBER (1916-1979)

by

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ABSTRACT

TWELVE-TONE WRITING IN THE PIANO MUSIC OF

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Advisor: Professor Joseph N. Straus

The purpose of this research is to find out through detailed analytical studies, Ben Weber's twelve-tone language and his individual style. It has been briefly mentioned by himself and by others, that Weber used the 'twelve-tone technique' in most of his compositions, but there has been no extended and thorough analytical study done on any one of his compositions to prove that he actually is a 'twelve-tone composer', and to find out what his musical style really is. I have selected five pieces for analytical studies, of which the compositional dates span from 1939 (23 years of age) to 1972 (56 years of age): *Five Bagatelles for Piano*, Op. 2 (1939), *Fantasia (Variations)*, Op. 25 (1946), *Lyric Piece*, Op. 40a (1953-4), *Humoreske*, Op. 49 (1958), and *Intermezzo*, Op. 64 (1972). *Five Bagatelles* (Ch. 2), *Lyric Piece* (Ch. 3), and *Humoreske* (Ch. 4) are each devoted a chapter, and thoroughly analyzed, and *Intermezzo* and *Fantasia (Variation)* are put together in Ch. 5, with brief analyses of both pieces. Besides some articles and newspaper clippings, there are hardly any secondary sources found on the subject of Ben Weber and his music; however there is a very important primary source in addition to the

scores, which is an unpublished memoir titled, “How I took 63 years to commit suicide by Ben Weber (as told to Matthew Paris).” Although there is not much explanation of his music, it is still very significant in terms of understanding Weber’s character, personality, and philosophy.

To my parents

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I am deeply thankful to my loving husband, Jin, for his support, encouragement, and for all his help with musical examples, editing, and formatting. He really has made the whole dissertation process so much easier, and I thank him from the bottom of my heart for being there for me emotionally during many tough times.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Biographical Sketch

> When Arnold Schoenberg introduced his twelve-tone system of composition to the musical world in the first quarter of the century, he was making history of a sort different from Antheil's with his "mechanical music" or Cowell's with his "tone clusters". The system produced not just a new sound but a new way of writing music. In America, a rather large number of musicians have used the system in parts of their work; however, the three men cited previously--Weiss, Riegger, and Weber--are those who have used it most consistently and so have become known as twelve-tone composers.[1]

Ben Weber used the twelve-tone technique in most of his compositions. Weber is quoted, by Oliver Daniel in an article for Broadcast Music Inc. (1965): "However, my use of 'techniques with twelve tones', i.e., Serial music, has been consistent over a period of now twenty-two years, and most of what I and some others consider to be my most important work is accomplished within these means."[2] Milton Babbitt quotes Weber, as saying that his "decision to use the twelve-tone technique" was "because I find in it greater freedom for my imagination."[3] Weber further explains the use of twelve-tone technique in his unpublished *Memoir*[4]: "Now I had never written twelve-tone music to

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[1] *High Fidelity Magazine*, August 1956, 64. Found in newspaper clippings at the research library of the performing arts library of the New York Public Library.
[2] 'Notes by Stephen Hough' from his CD titled, 'New York Variations.' London-Hyperion, 1998.
[3] Milton Babbitt, "Ben Weber (1916-1979)," *Perspectives of New Music* 17.2 (1979): 12.
[4] There are further references of this unpublished autobiography later in this chapter.

make a career out of it. I simply write what appeals to me. I only used it as a method of organizing my music so I could maintain my technical relationship to what I was doing."[5] But Weber did not consider himself as others did, a 'twelve-tone composer'; he says, "I never felt as though I were a part of any particular group of people, but I may have been one of the first American composers to write in the twelve-tone system. I am not a twelve-tone composer, though I use twelve-tone technique. I write tonal music with equal facility if I want to...."[6]

Weber was influenced and inspired by Arnold Schoenberg. His first encounter with Schoenberg was the *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, and he studied Schoenberg's compositions by himself.[7] Weber learned the twelve-tone technique on his own; he learned by studying available scores by Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern, at the Chicago Public Library.[8] Unfortunately, Weber only had one visit with Schoenberg in his life (1940), but he was greatly encouraged in musical composition by Schoenberg. Weber did not have enough money to study with him, but Schoenberg was very optimistic about the composition that Weber showed him (*Five Bagatelles*), and Schoenberg said, "It's very beautifully conceived and very intelligent."[9] Weber knew every single piece that Schoenberg ever wrote, including a few that had not yet been recorded; for Weber, Schoenberg was an icon and saint.

Born in St. Louis, Missouri on July 23rd 1916, Weber was by no means musically influenced by his family background. In fact, he was always pressured into becoming a doctor, and he pursued this by attending medical school at the University of Illinois for

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[5] Weber's unpublished *Memoir* (1972), chapter 4. There is no pagination in the entire document.
[6] *Memoir*, chapter 3.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Id.
[9] Id.

one year. But it was not too long before he realized his preference in music, and in 1937, he decided to attend De Paul University in Chicago for training in piano, voice, and theory.[10]

Weber is largely self-taught as a composer; he taught himself to play the piano by ear and taught himself to read music. For his first composition lesson, Weber was asked by his composition teacher (at De Paul University) to write a piece of music based on Beethoven's first string quartet as a model. When he returned with a wild, atonal version, his teacher, having no meaningful response to give, told Weber to write the second movement. That was Weber's first and last composition lesson. Matthew Paris[11] describes Weber as following: "He invented himself; in all things including music, he was an auto-didact. He was one of the few American composers who never studied with Nadia Boulanger, went to France or Germany, nor took a degree from any place. It never occurred to him to be unoriginal; he was a natural eccentric."[12]

Milton Babbitt writes in his article about Weber: "During the thirty years of our friendship, Ben spoke often, with pride and regret of his limited 'formal' training in music, and particularly in composition. But, unlike most autodidacts--who so often display the disastrous effects of an incompetent teacher--Ben viewed his educational situation as a way, a need to learn for himself from music itself as heard with his own

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[10] Biographical information in previous and following paragraphs is found in the following biographical dictionaries: Ruth Anderson, *Contemporary American Composers: A Biographical Dictionary* (Boston, Mass.: G. K. Hall & Co., 1982); Theodore Baker, *Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992); Neal Butterworth, *A Dictionary of American Composers* (New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1984); David Ewen, *American Composer: A Biographical Dictionary* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1982); and Matthew Paris and Lester Trimble, *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music* (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 1986).

[11] Matthew Paris is an executor of Weber's estate.

[12] *Memoir*, an introduction by Matthew Paris.

ears."[13] Weber never taught at universities, and rarely gave lectures, although he did teach composition and theory privately.

Weber was a prolific composer. After arriving in New York in 1945, Weber's music began to be recognized by other colleagues, and by the early 1950s, his career and reputation were at their peak, mostly on the strength of pieces such as *Symphony on Poems of William Blake,* Op. 33 (1950), Two Pieces for String Orchestra*,* Op. 34 (1950), and String Quartet*,* Op. 35 No. 2 (1951). His music was commissioned by the Fromm Foundation, the Ford Foundation, Clarion Music Society, Rockefeller Foundation, and Society of Louiville Orchestra; his music was premiered, performed, and recorded by distinguished artists such as George Bennette, David Burge, Joseph Fuchs, Julius Baker, Leonard Bernstein, William Masselos, Leopold Stokowski, Gilbert Kalish, and Joel Krosnick; and most of his music was published through the Composers Facsimile Edition of the American Composers Alliance, and by other publishing companies. Weber received an award and a citation from the National Institute of Arts and Letters in 1950, two Guggenheim grants, in 1950 and 1953, Fromm Foundation awards in 1953 and 1955, and the first Phoebe Ketchum Thorne Music Fund Award from 1965 to 68. He was the president of American Composers Alliance from 1961-62, and he was elected for membership for the National Institute of Arts and Letters in 1971.

Weber wrote for various instruments and combination of instruments. He wrote more for chamber ensembles than for solo instruments or for orchestra; in his ensemble music, he experimented with interesting combinations of instruments. He had a special interest in writing chamber music: "The real fault in American music is that younger composers all think they are going to make their 'reclame' for themselves by writing

[13] Babbitt, 12.

orchestral music, but I don't feel that way—I feel chamber music is the most intimate and beautiful concern you can have in music."[14]

His notable compositions for chamber ensemble are[15]: Five Pieces for Cello and Piano, Op. 13 (1941)[16]; *Sonata da Camera for Violin and Piano,* Op. 30 (1950)[17]; Two Pieces for String Orchestra, Op. 34 (1950)[18]; String Quartet, Op. 35 no. 2 (1951)[19]; Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 41 (1954)[20]; Concertino, Op. 45 (1956)[21]; and Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 52 (1961).[22]

Weber's love for singing inspired him to write a great deal of vocal music as well.[23] Notable among his vocal works are: *Concert Aria after Solomon,* Op. 29 (1949) for soprano, cello, violin, piano, and wind quintet; *Symphony on Poem of William Blake for Voice and Orchestra,* Op. 33 (1950); Four Songs for Soprano or Tenor with Solo Cello Accompaniment, Op. 40 (1953); *Ah, dear heart-madrigal for unaccompanied mixed voices,* Op. 43 no. 1; *Mourn! Mourn!* Op. 53 (1962); and *The Ways-Song Cycle for Soprano and Piano,* Op. 54 (1961).

Weber wrote more for the piano than for any other solo instrument. The complete list of solo piano works is as follows: *Five Bagatelles for Piano,* Op. 2 (1939); Piano Suite, Op. 8 (1940-41); *Three Pieces for Piano,* Op. 23 (1945); *Fantasia (Variations) for Piano Solo,* Op. 25 (1946); *Episodes,* Op. 26a (1947-8, revised version in 1957); Piano

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[14] *Memoir*, chapter 3.
[15] The selective lists for the chamber, vocal, and orchestral music appearing within next few paragraphs are based on popularity; they are not based on whether they are twelve-tone compositions or not.
[16] Written for Seymour Barab, and recorded by Seymour Barab and William Masselos.
[17] Written for Ahneid Ajemian, and recorded by Alexander Schneider.
[18] World premiered by the Clarion Orchestra and performed by Leonard Bernstein at Brandeis University festival.
[19] Recorded by the New String Quartet.
[20] Written for *Convegno Musicale* in Rome in 1954.
[21] Recorded by Julius Baker and Galimir String Quartet.
[22] Written for, premiered by, and recorded by William Masselos, about whom more will be said later.
[23] He states in his *Memoir* (chapter 3): "I never had any desire to be a concert artist or to perform except to play for my own pleasure on the piano. I wanted to be a singer though; I used to sing a great deal."

Suite, Op. 27 (1948); *Stop Light,* Op. 28a (undated); *Lyric Piece,* Op. 40a (1953-54); *New Adventure,* Op. 44a (1956); *Humoreske,* Op. 49 (1958); *Intermezzo,* Op. 64 (1972); *Ciaconna & Capriccio,* Op. 68 (1979); and Piano Sonata, Op. 71 (1970).[24] Considering that Weber was an excellent amateur pianist, and that he wrote more for the piano than for any other solo instrument, it is surprising that he does not have too many solo piano compositions to list. He wrote in his *Memoir*: "I don't write a lot for the piano because I don't like to. Besides, I think most of the interesting and wonderful music for the piano has been done; why be repetitive?"[25]

Weber's representative orchestral works include: *Prelude and Passacaglia,* Op. 42 (1954), *Dolmen: An Elegy,* Op. 58 (1964), *The Enchanted Midnight,* Op. 60 (1969), and *Sinfonia Clarion,* Op. 62 (1973).

Not all composers are lucky enough to put all their efforts into composing alone, and Weber was one of the less fortunate; even though Weber's career was at its peak in the 1950s, it was never enough for him to just concentrate on composing. As Eric Salzman wrote in 1961, "Since his arrival in New York in 1945, he (Weber) has earned his basic bread as the time-honored profession of music-copying….not only skillful at ordinary copying, but he is also an autographer--an expert at a specialized art….."[26] Weber was often bitter and unhappy about how composers could not just compose, and with his lack of education in composition, he was always eager to make up for it: "He tried to restrict his copying to music which interested him, and from which he felt he could learn, and while he copied he kept the radio on, tuned to stations playing records from the repertory, with which he was determined to catch up, to compensate for that

[24] The last two opuses are not completed.
[25] *Memoir*, chapter 4.
[26] Eric Salzman, "Ben Weber: Autodidact and Autographer," *New York Times*, March 19, 1961: 12.

time lost as a pre-medical student."[27] Although copying was Weber's means of living, he was excellent at it; he says, "Even if I am doing menial work like copying other people's music, I do it as carefully as if it were mine. I continued to copy through 1976…I have learned a great deal from the mistakes of other composers."[28]

Weber had many friends, including Arthur Schnabel, John Cage, Elliot Carter, and Virgil Thomson. Weber did not have much money, but he loved making friends as he loved making music, so he cooked and entertained at his home. He was famous for it as John Cage writes in his 'Elegy for Ben Weber': "your work was always triple: composing, copying, and cooking."[29] Weber was loved by everyone as he loved and treasured many of his musical colleagues during his life and he wrote his music for his friends and lovers. Matthew Paris[30] describes this side of him well: "Ben's music was written for his friends, then for New York chamber groups, then for orchestras conducted by Stokowski and Bernstein, and finally for friends who happened to be also great musicians."[31]

Weber was more musically active earlier than later in his life and he rarely went out towards the end of his life, even when his compositions were being performed. He died alone in his apartment on May 9, 1979.[32] He was sixty-three years old.

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[27] Babbitt, 11.
[28] *Memoir*, chapter 7.
[29] *Memoir*, fifth addendum (there are five addendums included at the end of *Memoir*).
[30] Matthew Paris was co-executor of Weber's will and one of the directors of Ben Weber Foundation. He is also executor of Weber's estate and he holds the copyright of Weber's *Memoir*.
[31] *Memoir*, an introduction by Matthew Paris.
[32] The death was attributed to a heart attack.

1.2 Reception and reputation

> If we look back, say, 40 years……everyone of the composers mentioned above (Elliott Carter, Henry Brant, Milton Babbitt, George Perle, Lou Harrison, Leon Kirchner, Ralph Shapey, and Gunther Schuller) had already established a reputation, and we could add to the list people who have since died but were, in 1959, under 50 and nationally, even internationally prominent: John Cage, Leonard Bernstein, Morton Feldman, Irving Fine, Mel Powell, Ben Weber, and Hugo Weisgall.[33]

Arnold Schoenberg's immigration to the United Stated in 1930s had an impact on American composers at that time. Weber was immediately influenced by this new way of composition, and he became one of very few Americans who employed this technique consistently. Weber did not consider himself as a "twelve-tone composer", rather, he simply employed the technique in his compositions; nevertheless, he was considered as a "twelve-tone composer" by others, because of his consistant use of this technique.

The twelve-tone system was developed to eradicate tonal implications, but not all of the practitioners of serialism were as uninterested in the tonal sound. Even in Schoenberg's day, his followers, notably his devoted student Alban Berg, found ways to inject elements of haunting tonal harmony into astringent twelve-tone scores, for example in Berg's Violin Concerto and his second opera, Lulu.[34] And Weber was one of them.

When describing Weber's music, the most frequently used terms are "lyrical", "contrapuntal", "tonal implications", and "freely twelve-tone music." David Ewen says, in his biographical dictionary of American composers: "Within structures of tonal music

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[33] Paul Griffiths, "Where are America's young composers?" *New York Times*, February 28, 1999: 2.33.
[34] Anthony Tommasini, "Unraveling The Knots Of the 12 Tones," *New York Times,* October 14, 2007: 30.

he employed a basically contrapuntal twelve-tone technique but with tonal implications."[35] George Bennette writes, "If Schoenberg's twelve-tone technique provided Ben Weber with a tool for expression, he is in no sense an academic dodecaphonist. His adaptation of this technique, to his own creative ends, has led him to an individual style."[36]

The purpose of my dissertation, through detailed studies and analysis, is to find out what actually is Weber's individual style. It is clear that Weber used a "twelve-tone composition technique" influenced by Schoenberg in a number of his compositions, but there has been no extended and thorough analytical study done on any one of his compositions to prove that he actually was a "twelve-tone composer". According to Milton Babbitt, Weber himself was not in favor of writing about music or talking about music: "Indeed, the word about music, in its written as well as oral manifestations was not a comfortable medium of expression or communication for him. He would not write articles…"[37] Since the composer has not written any considerable writings about his music,[38] it is necessary for scholars to step in on his behalf and try to come up with a logical explanation about what his compositional style and dodecaphonic writing is all about.

During Weber's lifetime, there were many newspaper articles written about his music and its performances, as well as some articles in scholarly journals, and many insightful articles in the Bulletin of American Composers Alliance.[39] Nevertheless, in

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[35] Ewen, 707.
[36] George Bennette, "George Bennette plays music by Ben Weber and Nikos Skalkottas," from "Notes by George Bennette" on LP cover.
[37] Babbitt, 11.
[38] Weber's unpublished *Memoir* does not contain much information about his music.
[39] Refer to the bibliography.

the years after his death in 1979, aside from a few newspaper articles and a couple of pages in biographical dictionaries, there is no significant literature to review on the matter of his musical style. And because of this fact, it is believed that an in-depth study of some of his music is not only necessary, but owed to the composer who has so eagerly participated in the era of American serialism.

In a recent article, Anthony Tommasini stresses the importance of twelve-tone music, and its place in musical history: "Now that decades of hostility are past, maybe it is time to reacknowledge the pervasive impact of this path-breaking development.…… The development of twelve-tone technique was no necessity. During the same period, Bartók, Stravinsky, and other giants were finding enthralling ways to adapt, transform, and shake up tonality. Instead Schoenberg's great adventure was as a critic Alex Ross[40] puts it in his book, 'one man's leap into the unknown.' But what a leap!"[41]

This project is not only significant for providing much-needed research and study on Weber and his music, but more importantly, it is a jumping-off point for continuing research and study in twelve-tone music, including Schoenberg's momentous influence on the musical world, on American composers in the twentieth century, and on future composers and theorists who will compose and write in this idiom.

In 1999, a group of composers gathered to mark the twentieth anniversary of Weber's death, in a program called "Ben Weber Remembered"[42]; and five of Weber's composer-colleagues (Milton Babbitt, Ned Rorem, Lou Harrison, Francis Thorne, and Michael Colgrass) composed tributes for this event. Weber holds a representative place

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[40] Tommasini, 30. Tommasini mentions in his article, a critic Alex Ross and his book, "The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century."
[41] Ibid.
[42] This retrospective concert was held at the miller theatre (NYC).

in post-war serialism in America; he needs to be recognized, paid tribute to, and his music should be performed and studied more extensively.

1.3 Methodology

The research and study for this dissertation originates with my hypothesis that Weber was a "twelve-tone composer." The focus of my dissertation will be an analytical study of selected works for solo piano. In the course of examining his music through next few chapters, I will attempt to find out whether or not Weber used the "twelve-tone technique" in his compositions, and come up with a logical answer as to what kind of twelve-tone language is evident in his music.

Although there is very modest secondary sources for this project, there are considerable amount of primary sources available; mainly scores. Almost all of Weber's completed solo piano works have been published through the Composers Facsimile Editions of the American Composers Alliance, or by publishing houses such as Mobart, Bomart, and Merion; many of these works have been recorded by well-known artists of that time, such as William Masselos, George Bennette, and Grete Sultan.

I have selected five pieces for a close study spanning the years 1939-1972 (23-56 years of age): *Five Bagatelles for Piano,* Op. 2 (1939), *Fantasia (Variations),* Op. 25 (1946), *Lyric Piece,* Op. 40a (1953-4), *Humoreske,* Op. 49 (1958), and *Intermezzo,* Op. 64 (1972). *Five Bagatelles* (Ch. 2), *Lyric Piece* (Ch. 3), and *Humoreske* (Ch. 4) are each given a separate chapter and thoroughly analyzed. The *Intermezzo* and *Fantasia*

(Variation) are put together in Ch. 5, titled, "Questionable twelve-tone pieces", of which the reason will be explained within that chapter.

Five Bagatelles for Piano is Weber's first twelve-tone composition, adhering closely to Schoenberg's technique,[43] and one of the first American compositions written in the twelve-tone idiom to be published.[44] *Lyric Piece* and *Humoreske* are Weber's shorter piano pieces, and *Intermezzo* is Weber's last completed composition for piano. *Fantasia (Variations)*, written for William Masselos, is considered as the most important work among his solo piano compositions.

In addition to a small number of shorter articles and newspaper clippings on Weber, there are some archival materials available at the research library of performing arts division of the New York Public Library. Among scores, recordings, and clipping files, the most important archival source would be four boxes of miscellaneous music,[45] in which, scores, parts, manuscripts, facsimiles, and sketches are found. In addition, the American Music Center has about fifty-five scores on deposit at the New York Public Library and there is a file at the American Music Center with substantial materials about Weber (under the file name 'Ben Weber').

The most important primary source, apart from his scores, is an unpublished *Memoir* titled, "How I took 63 years to commit suicide by Ben Weber[46] (as told to Matthew Paris)." This literature is a part of a private collection of Matthew Paris, and it was dedicated to William Masselos: "For William Masselos: memento mori." Matthew Paris took down Weber's memories on tape and later organized the transcription into a

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[43] Effie Carlson, *A Bio-Bibliographical Dictionary of Twelve-Tone and Serial Composers* (Metuchen, N. J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1970), 182.
[44] Bennette, "Notes by George Bennette."
[45] File number JPB 83-317.
[46] The title of this document was chosen by Weber.

book[47]; Weber talks about his childhood, his family, his years in Chicago while studying music, and his life in New York as a composer and a copyist. It is an erotic confession in regards to his homosexuality, and it is about accounts with his musical friends and with musical celebrities such as Schnabel and Stokowski. Although there is not much explanation of his music, it is still very significant in terms of understanding Weber's character, personality, and philosophy. After all, there is no doubt that all of those elements influenced Weber as a composer.

[47] Also an excerpt of this memoir was published in the Brooklyn Literary Review (refer to the bibliography), of which Matthew Paris was an editor, and an excerpt is cited in 'Notes by Stephen Hough' in his CD, "New York Variations."

CHAPTER 2: *Five Bagatelles for Piano* op. 2 (1939)

2.1 Introduction

> The *five bagatelles* which appeared in 1938 were the first American compositions written in the twelve-tone idiom to be published. They are proof that this technique, usually associated with the more sober workings of the psyche, can also be employed for the expression of wit and light-heartedness. They won the admiration of both Schoenberg and Varèse. These miniatures present a variety of moods—the teasing of Nos. 1 and 3, the lyricism of Nos. 2 and 5, and the painful intimacy of No. 4.[1]

Weber's first work for piano--and first twelve-tone composition adhering closely to Schoenberg's twelve-tone technique--was *Five Bagatelles*.[2] Written in 1939 and dedicated to Harriet Parker,[3] Weber may have chosen the piano as the vehicle for his first twelve-tone piece because he was a pianist himself.

These five short pieces (each either one or two pages long) are typical of bagatelles: light-hearted in conception, each exploring a different color, expression, and mood. By using this genre, Weber presents the twelve-tone technique in a less harsh and less serious milieu than is usual. *Five Bagatelles* was recorded by George Bennette[4] by Desto records in 1973 along with two other piano works by Weber, *Three Pieces for*

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[1] George Bennette, *George Bennette Plays Pusic by Ben Weber and Nikos Skalkottas* (Desto Records-Stereo DC 7136, 1973), extracted from the back cover of the record, "Notes by George Bennette."
[2] Effie B. Carlson, *A Bio-Bibliographical Dictionary of Twelve-Tone and Serial Composers* (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc.,1970), 182.
[3] A pianist and a good friend of Weber from his years in Chicago.
[4] A blind pianist who shared many musical interests with Weber. Bennette performed many of Weber's piano compositions in concerts, and he was the dedicatee of the unfinished *ciaconna* (for piano).

Piano (1945) and *Fantasia (Variations)* (1946). The bagatelles were published by New Music Edition (1940) and Merion Music (1940).

Lou Harrison says of *Five Bagatelles*: "the pieces are in the twelve-tone style, and sensitive and clear. Their sonority is less sharp or hard than is customary to the technique, and their expressive content less violently introspective."[5] Also, this piece was praised by Edgar Varèse: "I have been looking over your five bagatelles and I think they are the most intelligent and beautiful pieces I know in the twelve-tone technique."[6]

Five Bagatelles are each based on a different row. Each bagatelle is based on one form of the row, with the exception of the last bagatelle, which is based on P0, I0, and R0. The rows used in each bagatelle are related to each other; some ideas from the row in the first bagatelle are explored further in the following rows, and many segmentations of each row (from each bagatelle) are derived directly from the row used in the first bagatelle (this will be further explained in later subchapters).

Each piece is divided into multiple sections with the exception of the third bagatelle, which is composed as a single unit. The fourth bagatelle, marked *Adagio*, is the only slow piece; the first and third bagatelles move quickly and are more rhythmic and motivic; while the second and fifth are more linear and lyrical in somewhat slower tempos. There is much contrapuntal writing in these bagatelles, such as the two clearly independent voices in the B section of the first bagatelle; the canonic effects employed in the third; the independent entries of five voices in the B section of the fourth; and the three clear fugal-like entries at the beginning of the fifth. The fourth bagatelle represents Weber's personality and character most fully; the introspective and intimate lyricism in

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[5] Lou Harrison, "Five Bagatelles for Piano Solo op. 2," *New York Herald Tribune*, April 8, 1946: 14.
[6] Ben Weber's unpublished *Memoir*, chapter 4.

Weber's music exemplifies why Anthony Tommasini titled his article about Weber, "A Serialist with a Penchant for Lyricism."[7]

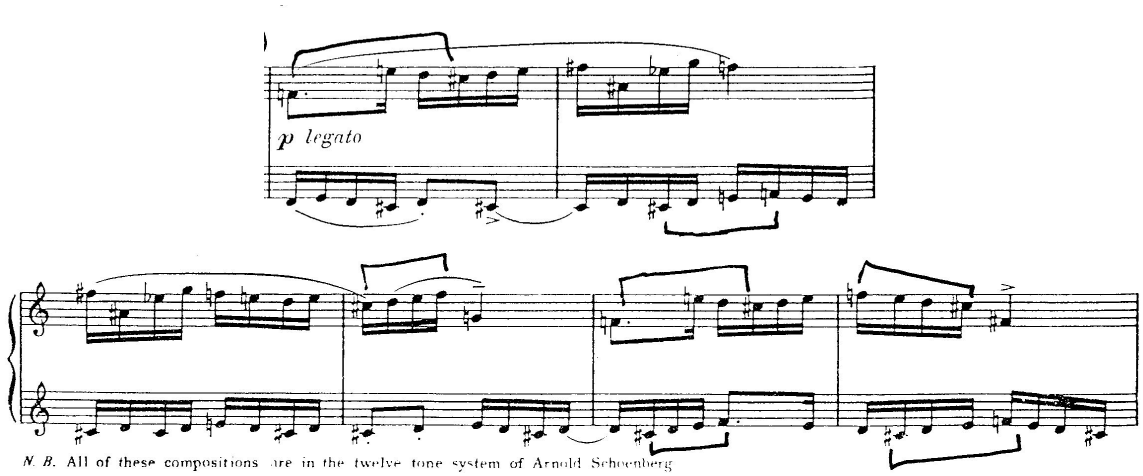
2.2 Bagatelle I

The first bagatelle of this collection is energetic, rhythmic, and vibrant. The faster tempo is especially noticeable in the B section, where the continuous sixteenth-notes have the character of continuous motion. The bagatelle is in three sections: ABA′. The music in the A section is more abrupt, fragmented, and motivic, whereas the B section has more continuous and relentless character. The brief return of the A section at the end of the bagatelle has the same rhythm and motivic character, with a continuous dotted rhythm.

The musical texture is largely polyphonic; there are two clearly independent voices present throughout in the treble and the bass clef. In the A section, there is a brief section with three voices; two extra voices join the soprano as chords, but these are merely an accompaniment. There is more two-part polyphony in the B section. The independence of the voices is clearest in the latter half of the B section, from m. 38, where both hands switch parts.

The most obvious motivic feature in this bagatelle is the recurrence of the tetrachord F-E-D-C# (4-3: 0134). These are first four pitch classes of the row and they are used repetitively in the B section: first in the lower register, mm. 22-37, and then in

[7] Anthony Tommasini, "A Serialist with a Penchant for Lyricism," *New York Times*, December 4, 1999: B15.



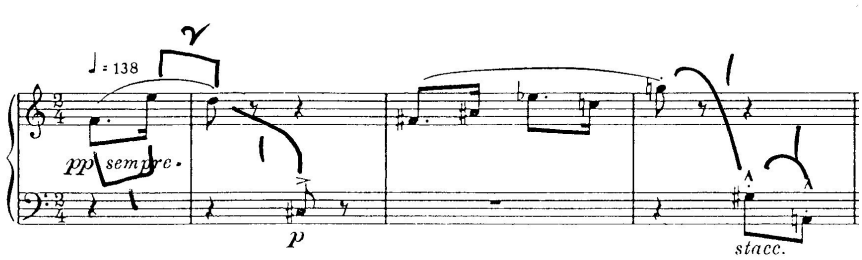
Ex. 2-1: The first four pitch classes of the row: F-E-D-C# (mm. 22-27).

higher register from m. 38 (Ex. 2-1). In these measures, the bass register uses only the notes of the tetrachord F-E-D-C# (4-3: 0134), while the high voice variously presents the row form or other motivic fragments. The tetrachord does appear every four measures in the soprano as the beginning of the row form entry, whether complete or incomplete.

This motive is interesting in that it presents step-wise motion[8] from F to C#, and the interval classes 1 and 2 have significant roles both in the tetrachord and in the row as a whole (the row begins and ends with ICs 1 and 2; Ex. 2-2). In using steps instead of leaps, Weber crafts a row that approximates a scale.

The row form used in this bagatelle is F-E-D-C#-F#-A#-Eb-C-G-G#-A (Ex. 2-3, the eleven-count). Weber experiments with an eleven-tone row in this bagatelle, even though twelve-tone rows are used in each of the other bagatelles; this is a way for Weber to experiment and freely adopt the twelve-tone system. The row commences and ends

[8] Step-wise motion in pitch-class space; some steps, for example F-E, are presented as pitch-interval 11 rather than 1.



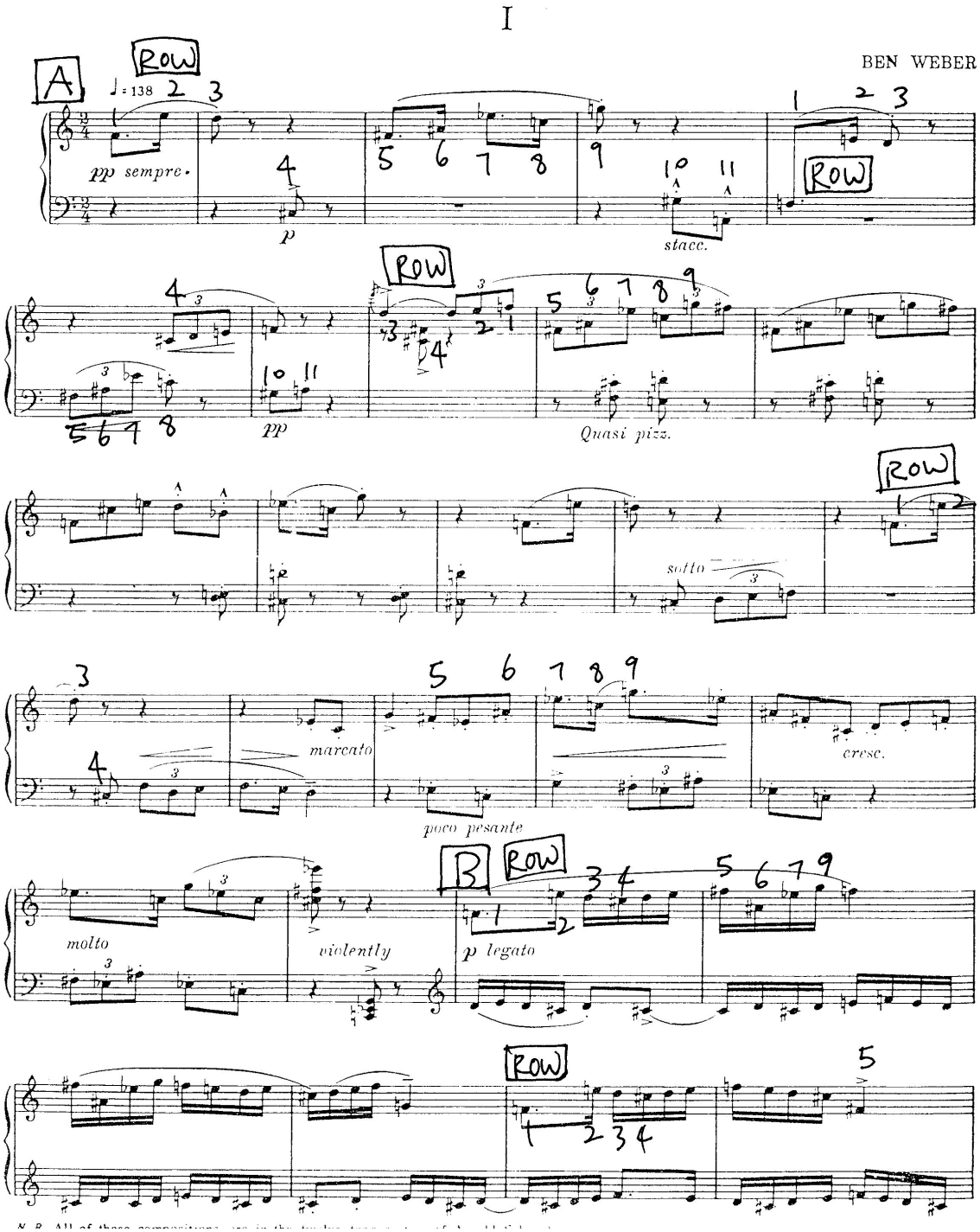
Ex. 2-2: Interval classes 1 and 2 appear in the beginning and at the end of the row.

with small intervals in scale-like motion[9], and has larger intervals in the middle. This bagatelle is based on a single row form, and there is no exploration of the row class through transposition, inversion, or retrograde.

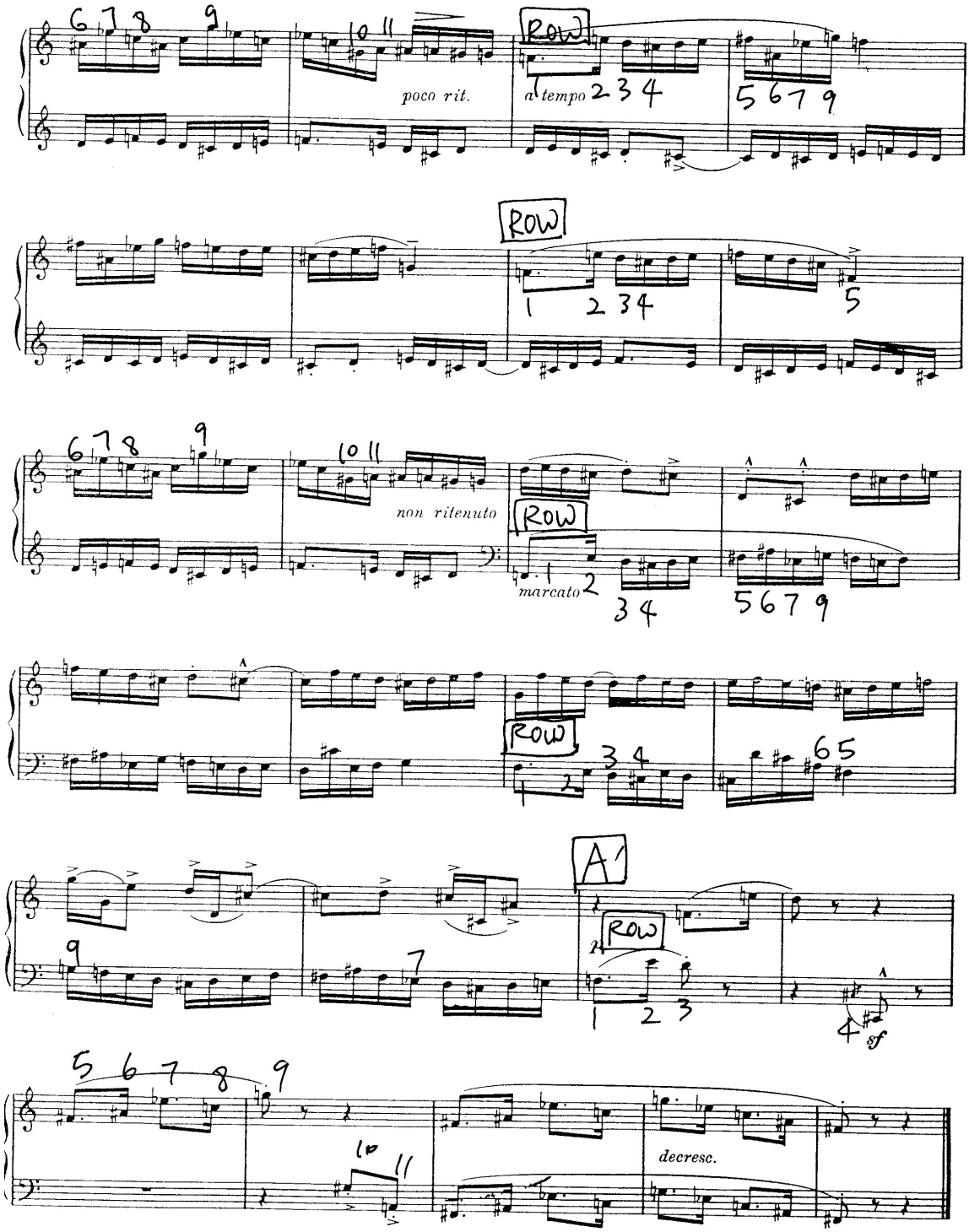
The most frequently used subsets of this row form are the following: F-E-D (3-2: 013) and C#-D- E (3-2:013), both of which are derived from the tetrachord F-E-D-C# (4-3: 0134, the most frequently used subset/motive in this bagatelle); and F#-A#-Eb-C-G (5-32: 01469). Less frequently used subsets which are derived from the pentachord are shown in Fig. 2-1: Eb-C-G (3-11: 037), F#-A#-D# (3-11: 037), F#-A#-D#-C (4-27: 0258), and C-Eb-G-Bb (4-28: 0358). There are inversionally symmetrical subsets within this row: the trichord G-G#-A (3-1:012); and two tetrachords, F-E-D-C# (4-3: 0134) and C#-F#-A#-D# (4-28: 0358).

In addition to the stepwise character of this row form, traditional chordal formations are apparent in some of the subsets mentioned above; they form a C minor chord, a Eb minor chord, a C half-diminished chord, a C minor-seventh chord, and a D# minor-seventh chord (Ex. 2-4). Another chordal formation that can be found in this row

[9] Scale-like motion in pitch-class space.



Ex. 2-3: The twelve-count.



Ex. 2-3: The twelve-count continued.

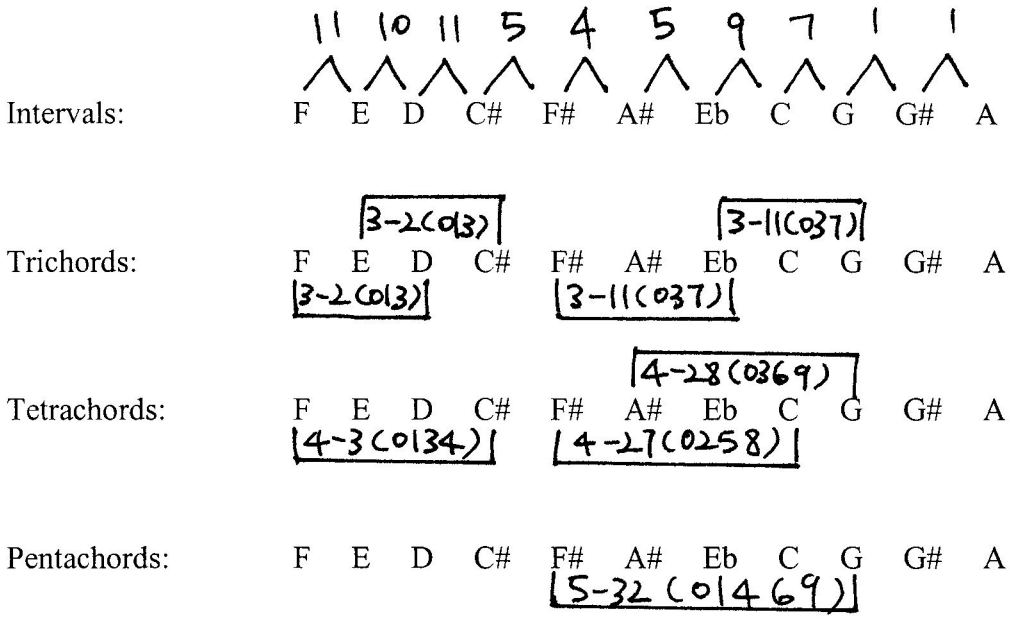
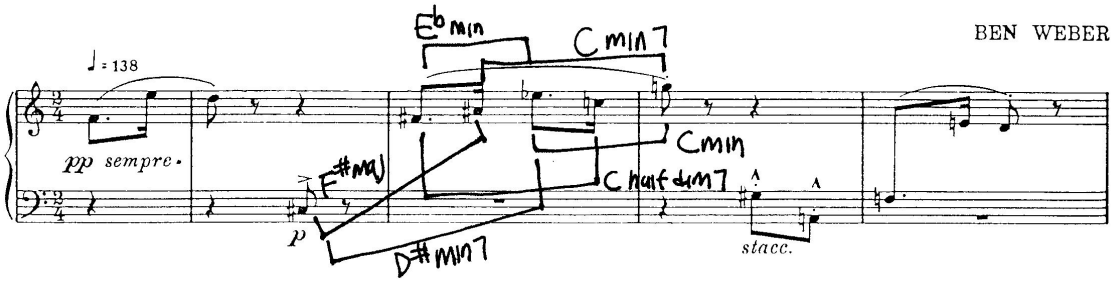
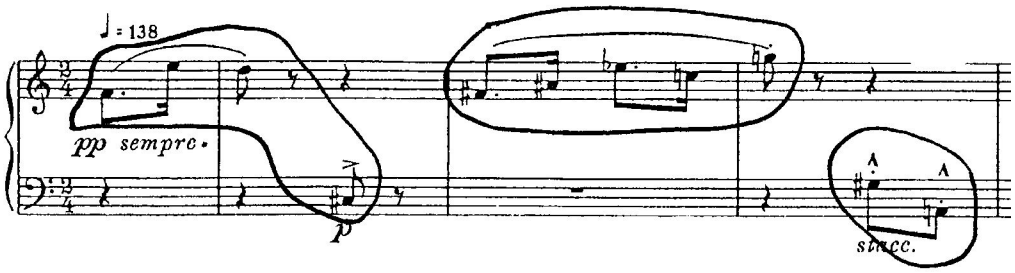


Fig. 2-1: Intervals and subsets used in the row.



Ex. 2-4: The traditional chordal formations of the row.

form is C#-F#-A# (3-11: 037, F# major chord). The octatonic nature of some of the segments is prominent. For example, the first four notes of the row belong to the octatonic collection C#-D-E-F-G-G#-A#-B; the five notes starting on F# (F#-A#-Eb-C-G) belong to a different octatonic collection C-C#-D#-E-F#-G-A-A#; and the overlapping of



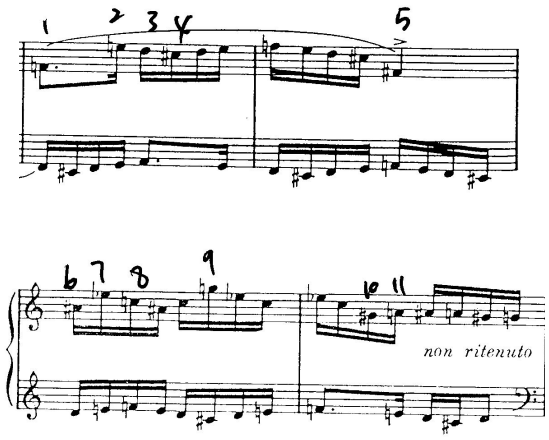
Ex. 2-5: The three-part segmentation of the row.

the two segments of the row form--C#-F#-A#-D# and Bb-Eb-C-G (related to each other by T9)--belong to the latter mentioned octatonic collection.

The scalar, chordal, and octatonic elements in the row are evident in this bagatelle. Through further analysis, we will find out whether the nature of this row becomes fundamental in Weber's compositional process or is unique to this row.

The row is divided into three parts: a principal four-note motive (F-E-D-C#); a five-note segmentation (F#-A#-Eb-C-G); and a two-note tag (G#-A) (Ex. 2-5). As seen in Ex. 2-5 from the A section, the row is divided between two independent voices to emphasize different subsets and motives used throughout the piece. For example, the trichord F-E-D (3-2: 013) and the pentachord F#-A#-Eb-C-G (5-32: 01469), are both placed in the treble clef; and both collections are marked with a slur. While the A section is fragmented and motivically driven, the B section presents the row within one voice with more melodic and linear character (Ex. 2-6).

Three motives, or segmentations derived from the row form, are emphasized and repeated throughout the A section; in fact, Weber is more concerned with experimenting with different subsets as motives, rather than in the laying out of the whole row form as many times as possible. The motives, F-E-D (3-2: 013), F-E-D-C# (4-3: 0134), and F#-

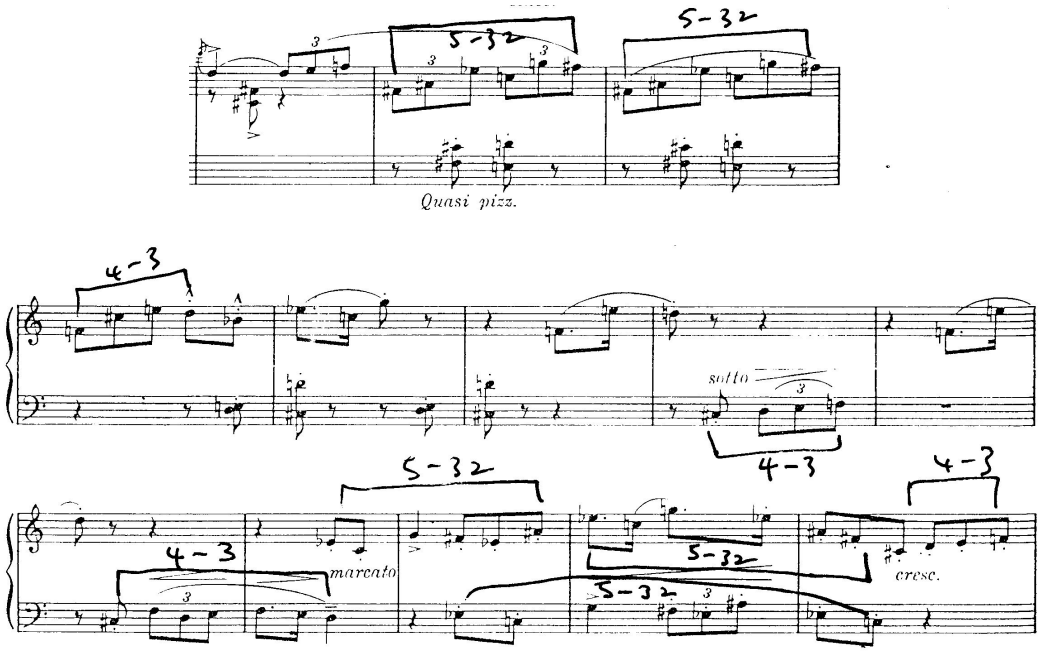


Ex. 2-6: The row appearing within one voice in the B section.

A#-Eb-C-G (5-32: 01469), usually appear in linear and fragmented form. Each of these row form segments, particularly the latter two, is treated with some degree of independence, and with a certain freedom as to internal order. Over the course of the A section, these motives are transformed into linear but elaborate short phrases with repeated pitch classes and changed internal order (Ex. 2-7). To some extent, the four-note motive and the five-note motive are treated as unordered pitch-class sets rather than as ordered segments of the row.

Chordal formations derived from the pentachord 5-32 (01469) become more active toward the end of the A section. In m. 20, a C minor chord appears in the treble clef over a C half-diminished chord in the bass clef, both in linear form. In m. 21, an Eb minor-seventh chord (missing A#) in the treble appears over a C minor in the bass, both in vertical form.

The tetrachord F-E-D-C# (4-3: 0134) dominates the B section. The continuous sixteenth figures that appear first in the lower register (from m. 22), then in the higher



Ex. 2-7: Subsets 4-3 (F-E-D-C#) and 5-32 (F#-A#-Eb-C-G) become more independent with repeated pitch classes and changed internal order.

register (from m. 38), contain only the four pitch classes of 4-3; they appear with differently ordered pitch classes and changed rhythm. Again, to some degree, the four-note motive is treated as an unordered pitch-class set rather than as an ordered segment.

Five Bagatelles as a whole, is considered to be a twelve-tone composition; but in the first bagatelle, Weber experiments with an eleven-tone row, therefore, the first bagatelle itself is an eleven-tone composition. It is also evident that most of the eleven-tone row presentations are not strict at all; PCs are missing, the order of PCs is reversed, and PCs and motive segments are repeated.

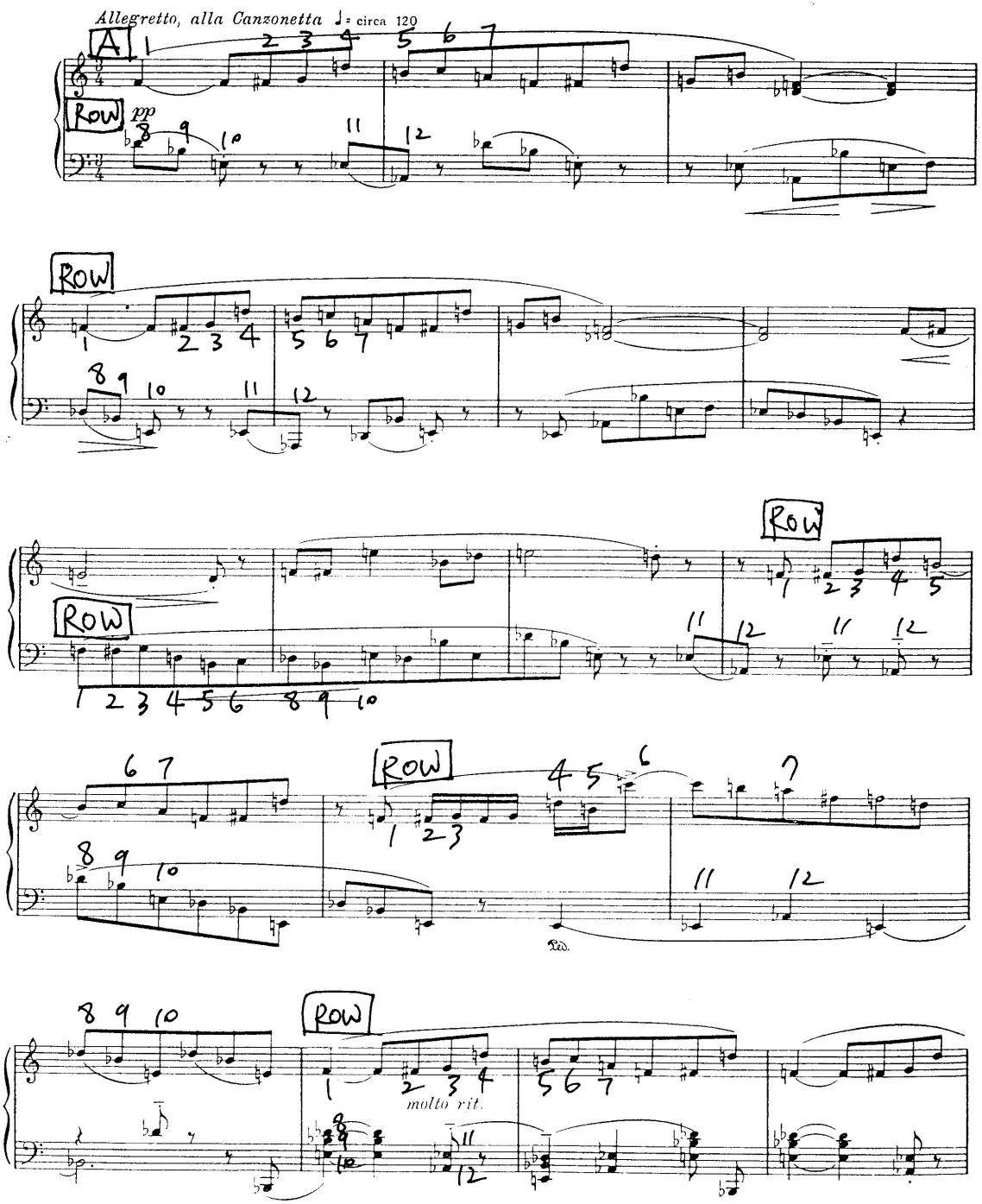
2.3 Bagatelle II

The second bagatelle is in ABA′ form. The A section presents the row with two main voices; the B section transposes a four-bar phrase almost exactly; and a shorter version of the A section (A′) appears at the end of the bagatelle.

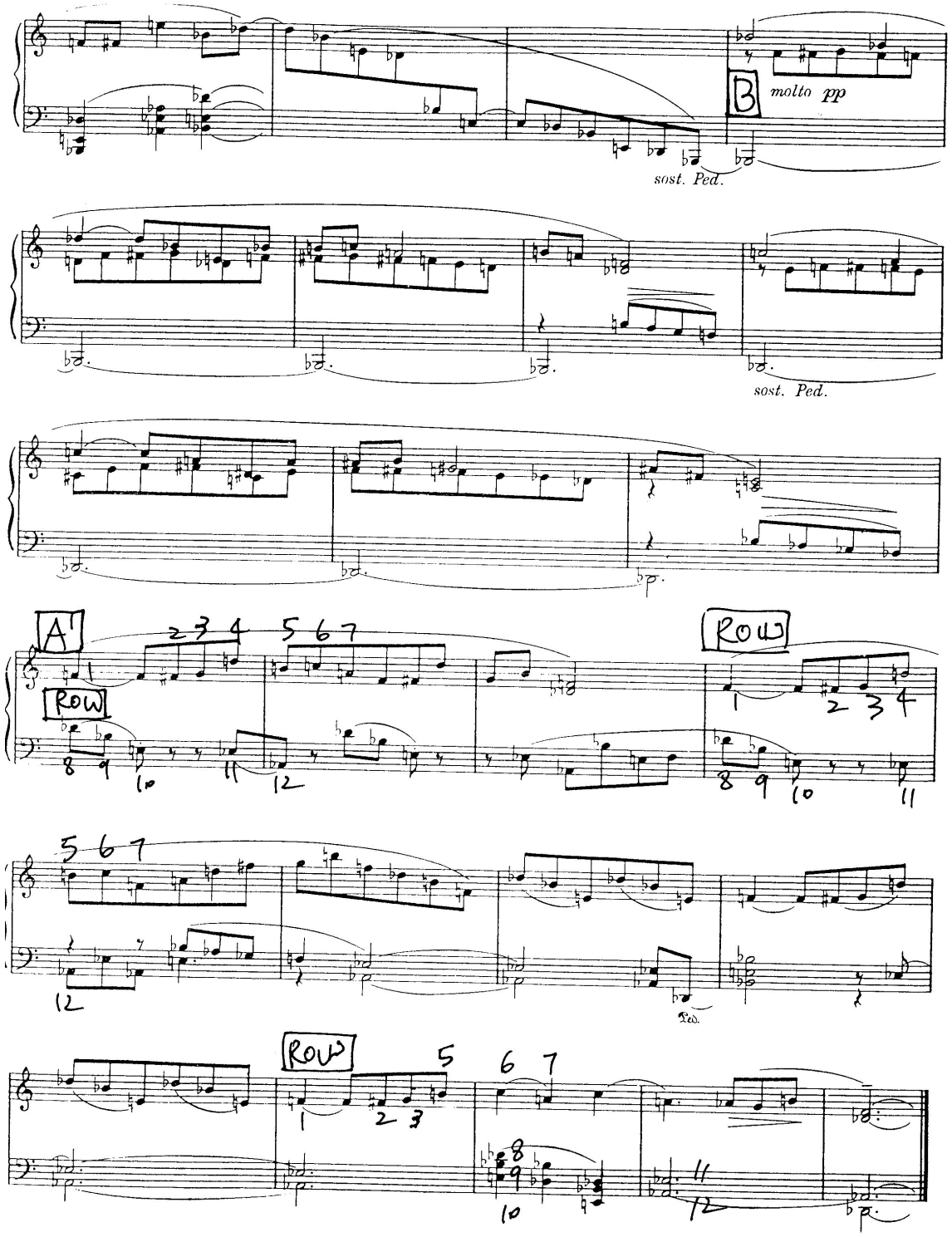
There are mainly two independent voices in the A section: a seven-note melody (F-F#-G-D-B-C-A) and a five-note accompaniment (Db-Bb-E-Eb-Ab), both of which play a significant role in presenting the row, which is used in only one form: F-F#-G-D-B-C-A-Db-Bb-E-Eb-Ab (Ex. 2-8, the twelve-count). The music in the A section is motivic and fragmentary; in contrast, the B section is contrapuntal with four independent voices, and there is no row present in this section. Although there is no full statement of the row in the B section, there are however, many features of the row—for example, Db-Bb-E in the melody and F-F#-G in the alto voice, which are segments derived from the row. Therefore, the B section is related to the row as well.

The most obvious motivic features found in this bagatelle are the trichord Db-Bb-E (3-10: 036), which forms a diminished chord[10], and the dyad Eb-Ab (interval 5, or 7 when reversed). These five pitch classes are the last five PCs of the row form, and these two motives are apparent in the placing of the row form in actual music (Ex. 2-9). Because the intervals of perfect fourth/perfect fifth (IC 5) tend towards chordal formation, the dyad Eb-Ab almost sounds like an Ab chord with a mediant omitted. Therefore, these two motives, the trichord 3-10 and the dyad mentioned above, appear more often in the

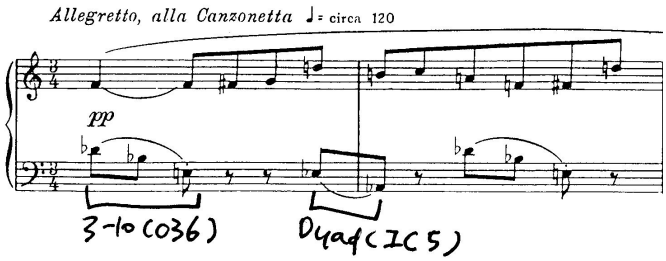
[10] However, the way the trichord appears in the music makes it look more like a diminished-seventh chord (E-G-Bb-Db) without a G.



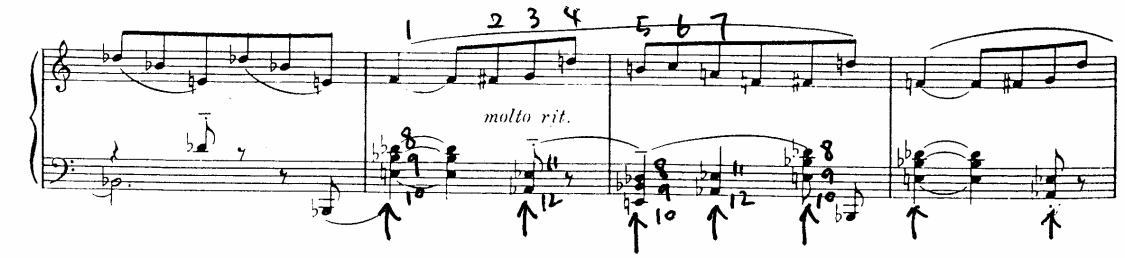
Ex. 2-8: The twelve-count.



Ex. 2-8: The twelve-count continued.



Ex. 2-9: Two motives: Db-Bb-E (3-10: 036) and Eb-Ab.

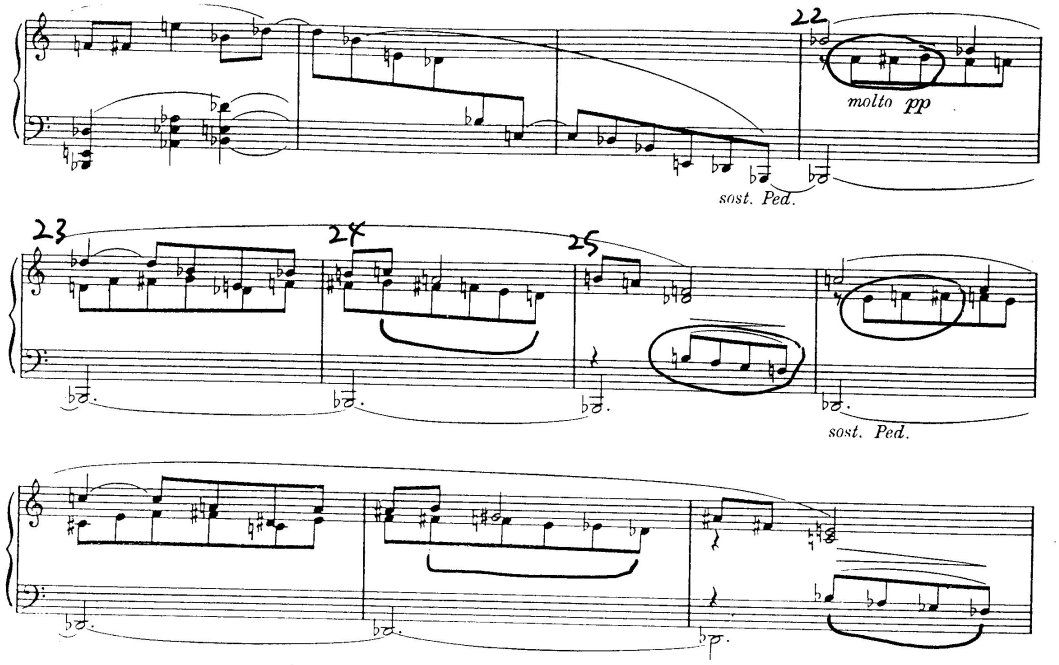


Ex. 2-10: Db-Bb-E (3-10: 036) and Eb-Ab in simultaneous form.

bass clef as an accompaniment, both in linear form within one voice (Ex. 2-9), and in vertical chordal form (Ex. 2-10).

Besides the obvious triadic formation, scalar passages are prominent. First, as evident in the beginning of this bagatelle, the first seven notes of the row form make the scale F-F#-G-A-B-C-D. These scalar motives are also present in the B section within the middle voice: for example, F-F#-G in m. 22, G-F#-F-E-D in m. 24, and B-A-G-F in m. 25 (Ex. 2-11). The four-measure phrase of mm. 22-25 is transposed by T11 in the next four measures (mm. 26-29) (with the exception of the bass note Db); therefore, the motives occur in the same way in the following four measures.

The most frequently used intervals in the row of this bagatelle are intervals 1 (minor second) and 9 (major sixth); the use of IC 1 is most apparent when we look at



Ex. 2-11: Scalar passages in the B section.

discrete subsets (Fig. 2-2): 3-1 (012), 3-2 (013), 3-3 (014), 3-4 (015), 4-4 (0125), 4-2 (0124), 4-16 (0157), and 6-18 (012578). IC 1 is also frequently used in the B section within many chromatic scalar motives.

The row used in the second bagatelle is derived from RI2 of the row used in the first bagatelle (see Fig. 2-3); musically, the row of the second bagatelle divides into three segmentations—melodic part (F-F#-G-D-B-C-A) and two accompanimental parts (Db-Bb-E and Eb-Ab), and the septachord and the trichord mentioned above are essentially the septachord F-D-Eb-C-G-G#-A and the trichord E-C#-A# from the row form in the first bagatelle (Fig. 2-3). Tetrachords are the main motives in the first bagatelle, but in the second bagatelle, motives are created to fulfill roles as melody and accompanimental figures. For example, two chords are used with pitch class sets Db-Bb-E (Bb diminished chord) and Eb-Ab (P4/P5), and the remaining scalar pitch classes become the melody.

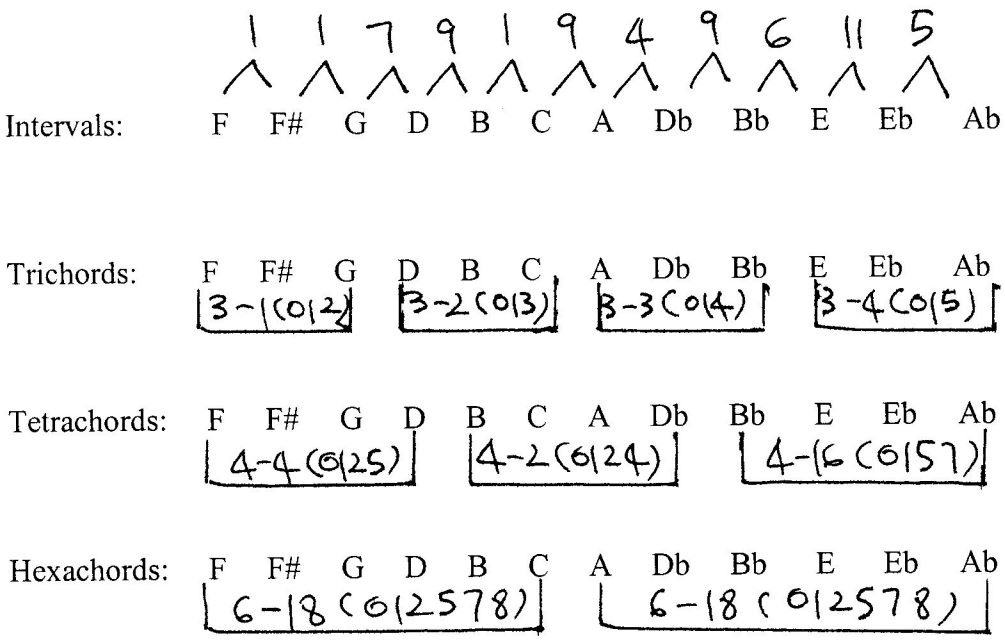


Fig. 2-2: Intervals and subsets used in the row.

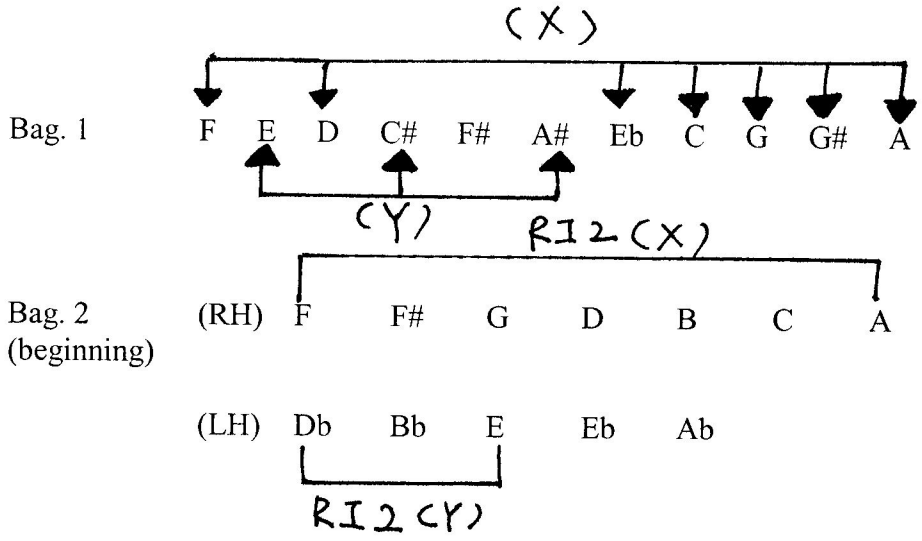
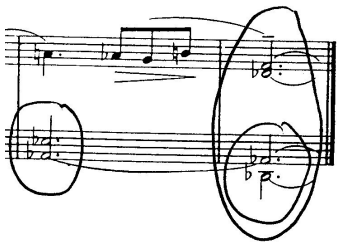


Fig. 2-3: The relationship between two row forms from Bagatelles 1 and 2.



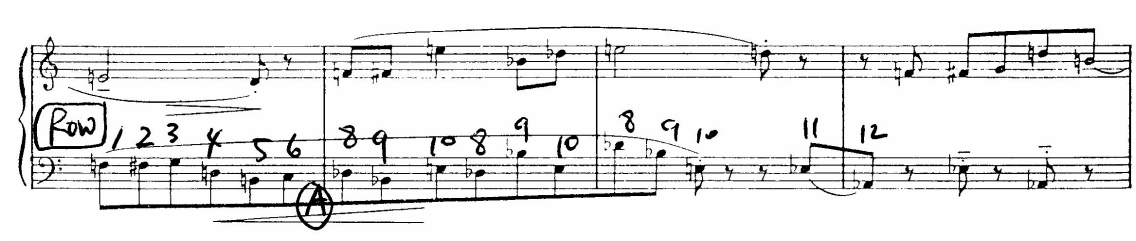
Ex. 2-12: Chordal formation at the end of the bagatelle.

Motivically and intervallically, this bagatelle is based on the above-mentioned two chords. In the last two measures of this piece, the perfect-fourth/perfect-fifth interval is stated twice in the bass clef as Ab-Eb and Db-Ab (Ex. 2-12); in addition, there is a chordal formation of Db-F-Ab in the final measure of this bagatelle.

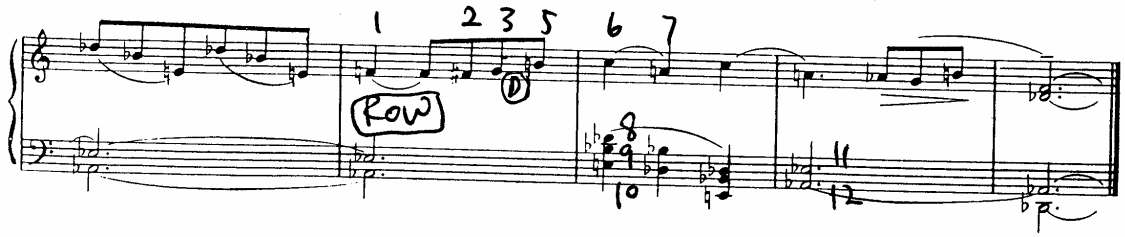
Another motivic element that plays an important role in this bagatelle is IC 4 (major third), or more specifically Db-F. For example, F is the first note of the row and Db is the eighth note of the row, but the row is divided into two sections (first seven notes in the treble clef and remaining five notes in the bass clef); as a result, F and Db coincide vertically creating the interval class 4 (Ex. 2-8). Db and F as a chord appears in mm. 3, 6, 25, 32, and 42, just to give a few examples; as the result of the frequent coincidence of Db and F, the second bagatelle essentially begins and ends with IC 4. This IC 4, the perfect fourth/perfect fifth dyad, and the constantly repeated Db-Bb-E (3-10), all suggest the interestingly invoking of tonal sounds in this bagatelle.[11]

The row occurs only in the A and A′ sections, and it is divided between two independent voices throughout these sections (Ex. 2-8). The only exception is in mm. 8-11, where the row is stated within a single voice in the bass clef (Ex. 2-13).

[11] The triad Db-Bb-E comes from the octatonic collection C-Db-Eb-Fb-F#-G-A-Bb; in fact, all six PCs C-A-Db-Bb-E-Eb from the row form are a part of this collection.



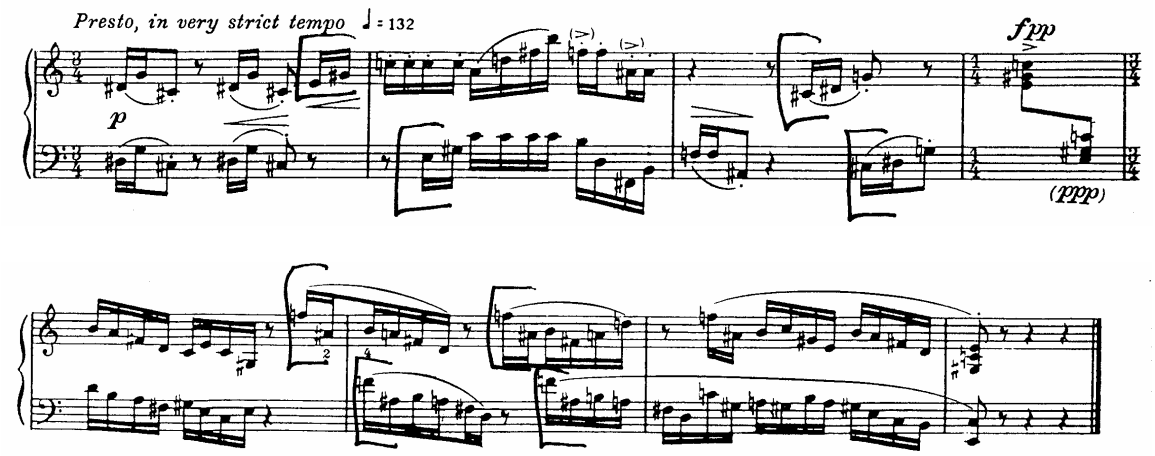
Ex. 2-13: The row presented within a single voice.



Ex. 2-14: The incomplete statement of the row.

The row is presented in two ways: in a long and continuous line within one voice, usually consisting of the first seven PCs of the row; and in a fragmentary version using the remaining five PCs. This division runs throughout the entire piece (again, with the exception of mm. 8-11); whenever the row is presented, the first seven PCs appear as a melody in the treble clef, and the other five PCs enter in two fragments (Db-Bb-E, and Eb-Ab) as accompanimental figures in the bass clef.

Generally, the row is presented in a straightforward manner; but there are exceptions. First, there are statements of the row where a pitch class is missing; for example, in mm. 8-11 (Ex. 2-13), there is an A missing, and in mm. 39-42, there is a D missing (Ex. 2-14). Second, the last five PCs of the row are often repeated within a row statement; when they recur, it is as a trichord (3-10) plus a dyad, for instance in mm. 16-17, the trichord and the dyad are repeated as vertical chords (Ex. 2-10), and in mm. 8-11,



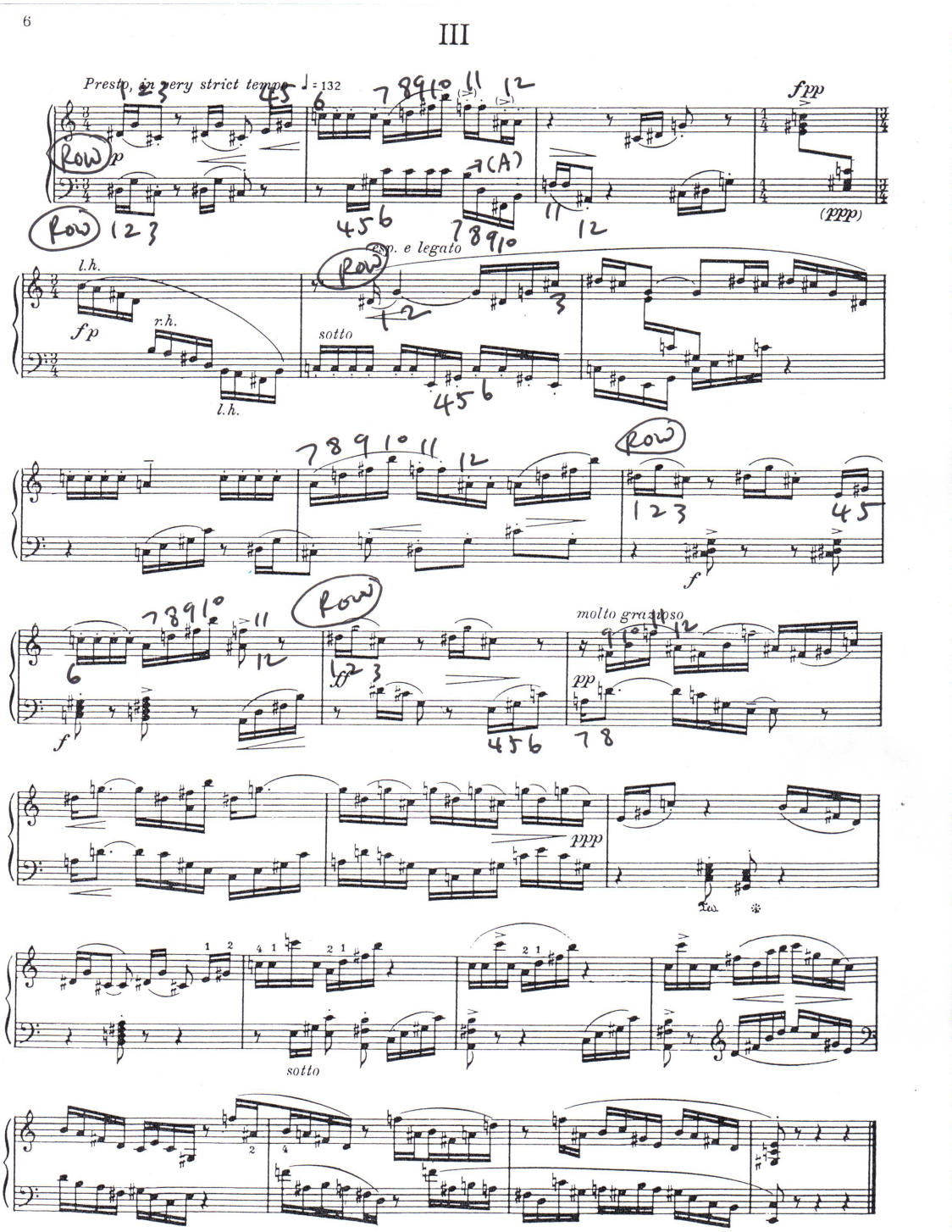
Ex. 2-15: Canonic entries in the bagatelle (mm. 1-4 and 21-24).

the trichord is repeated twice before the dyad appears (Ex. 2-13). Ultimately, the twelve-tone technique in this bagatelle is consistent.

2.4 Bagatelle III

The third bagatelle is a rhythmic and energetic piece in *Presto* tempo. It is full of small motivic fragments, frequent canonic effects, and constant musical interplay. The texture is contrapuntal throughout most of this bagatelle; the right and the left hand parts usually have a single line each of equal importance. There is continuous interaction between the hands, especially in the canonic passages (Ex. 2-15). The bagatelle is based on a single row and its fragments, and there is no significant change in texture, rhythm, or melody (row) to indicate a new section; therefore, this bagatelle is in a one-part form.

The row form used in this bagatelle is D#-G-C#-E-G#-C-A-D-F#-B-F-A# (Ex. 2-16, the twelve-count). Its interval contents are very interesting (Fig. 2-4). There are



Ex. 2-16: The twelve-count.

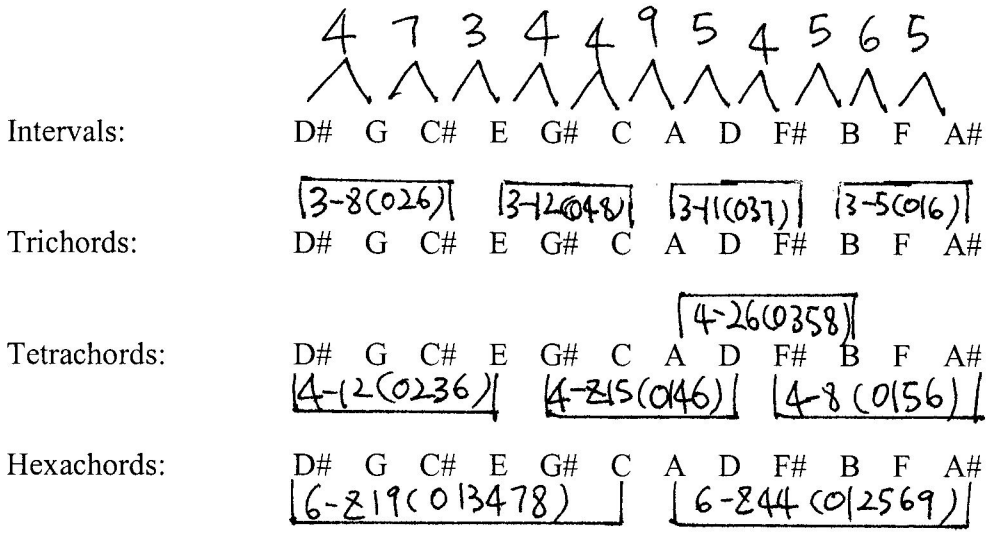


Fig. 2-4: Intervals and subsets of the row.

some bigger intervals (intervals such as 6, 7, and 9); there are no small intervals such as intervals 1 and 2; and the most frequently used ICs are 4 (major third) and 5 (perfect fourth). Because of such intervallic content, the row sounds more tonal and triadic (Fig. 2-5). Within the row, the following chordal formations can be extracted: G-C#-E (C# diminished-chord), C#-E-G# (C# minor-chord), E-G#-C (C augmented-chord), A-D-F# (D major-chord), D-F#-B (B minor-chord), E-G#-C-A (A minor/major seventh-chord), C-A-D-F# (D dominant seventh-chord), and A-D-F#-B (B minor seventh-chord). Weber especially emphasizes the trichord C-E-G# and the tetrachord A-D-F#-B; these two chords frequently appear as chordal accompaniment in the bass. The row also has an octatonic nature; the first four notes (D#-G-C#-E) belong to one octatonic collection (C-Db-Eb-Fb-F#-G-A-Bb), and next seven notes (G#-C-A-D-F#-B-F) belong to another collection (C-D-Eb-F-F#-G#-A-B).

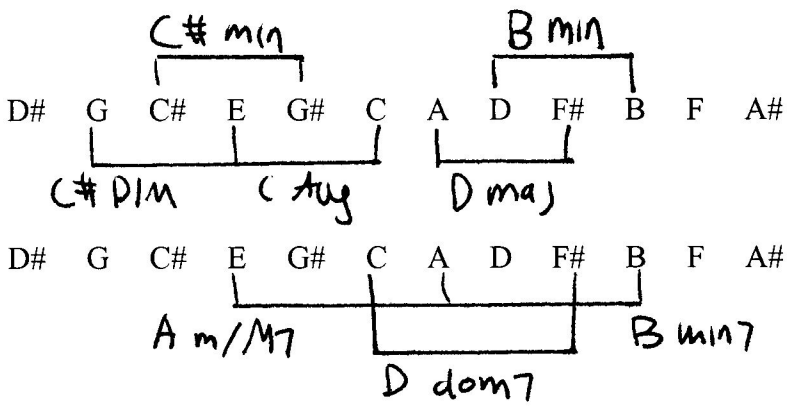


Fig. 2-5: Various chordal formations of the row.

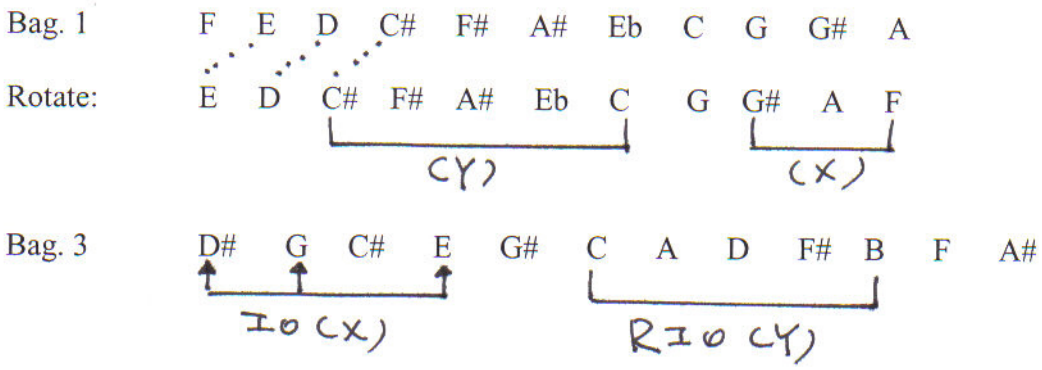
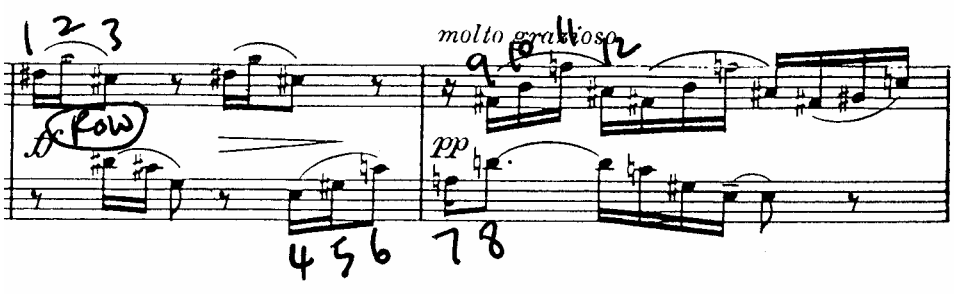


Fig. 2-6: The relationship between two row forms from Bagatelles 1 and 3.

The relationship between the rows used in the first bagatelle and the third bagatelle is not as close as the ones between the first two bagatelles; nevertheless, it is evident that there are two segmentations in this bagatelle which derive from the row in the first bagatelle—the ordered set C#-F#-A#-Eb-C and the unordered set [F, G#, A]. The pentachord is related by RI0 and the trichord is related by I0 (Fig. 2-6).

The discrete subset contents are listed in Fig. 2-4: 3-8 (026), 3-12 (048), 3-11 (037), 3-5 (016), 4-12 (0236), 4-Z15 (0146), 4-8 (0156), 6-Z19 (013478), and 6-Z44

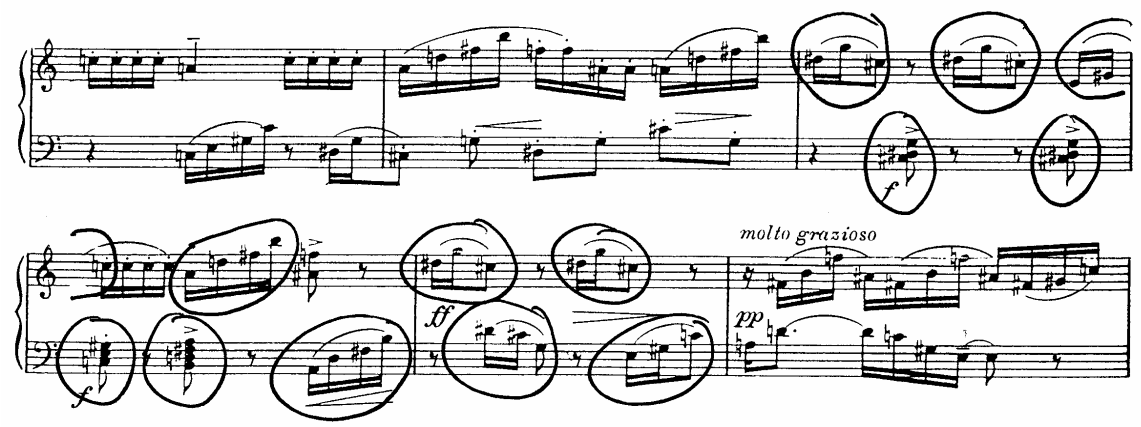


Ex. 2-17: The row divided between different voices.

(012569). Two of these subsets are inversionally symmetrical, so the order of intervallic contents remains the same when reversed: E-G#-C stacks two ICs of 4, and F#-B-F-A# is built of ICs 5-6-5. Another frequently used subset, the non-discrete A-D-F#-B, is also inversionally symmetrical, with ICs 5-4-5.

The row is used within one voice and divided among different voices as well. An example of an appearance within one voice is at the beginning of the piece (Ex. 2-16), where the row appears both in the treble clef within one voice and in the bass within another single voice (in m. 2, the B that occurs after four repeated Cs might be a misprint, and in fact an A). An example of voice division appears in mm. 12-13 (Ex. 2-17). The row is presented, not as a long, lyrical, melodic line, but in the form of abrupt segmentations and rhythmic, motivic fragments. This dance-like character is reinforced by the fast tempo.

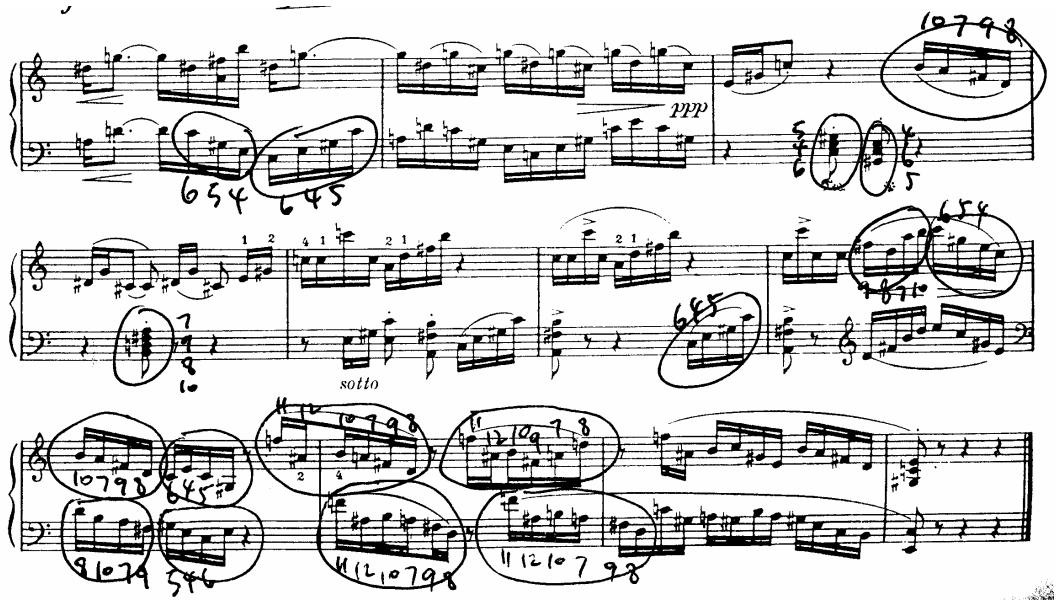
Every musical element of this bagatelle is set forth in the first three measures of the piece: the emphasis on the trichord motive D#-G-C# through unison, with both voices on the downbeat, and by repetition of the trichord; the canonic effect of the trichord motive E-G#-C in both voices; the repetition of C (repeated four times), which adds an abrupt, percussive nuance to the music; the segmentation of the tetrachord A-D-F#-B, the



Ex. 2-18: Trichord D#-G-C#, E-G#-C and tetrachord A-D-F#-B in vertical and horizontal form.

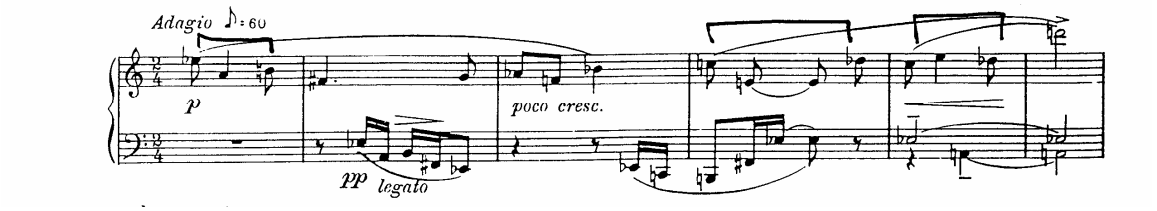
most frequent tetrachord motive in the bagatelle; and the segmentation of the dyad F-A#, whose interval content of IC 5 is one of the most frequent interval class in the row.

The segmentations of two trichords D#-G-C# (3-8) and E-G#-C (3-12), and one tetrachord A-D-F#-B (4-26) propel the piece; they appear mostly in linear form in both hands, but sometimes occur simultaneously, especially as left-hand chords (Ex. 2-18). This is particularly apparent in the latter part of the bagatelle; from m. 14 to the end of this piece, there is no complete statement of the row. The two trichords and a tetrachord occur frequently, with the addition of a hexachord motive, F-A#-B-A-F#-D. The subsets are treated with some degree of independence, and freedom as to internal order (Ex. 2-19). For example, E-G#-C becomes C-E-G# and G#-C-E, A-D-F#-B becomes B-D-F#-A and F#-D-A-B, and A-D-F#-B-F-A# becomes F-A#-B-A-F#-D and F-A#-B-F#-A-D. To some extent, the subsets are treated as unordered pitch class sets rather than as ordered segments of the row.



Ex. 2-19: Unordered PC sets.

Fairly straightforward statements of the row are combined with continuous statements of the three motivic subsets mentioned above. The row appears both within one voice and between two voices, clearly fragmented by slurs and rests; the motives usually appear in slurred linear form within one voice, but sometimes as accompanying chords in the bass. Finally, the brief change of meter for a single measure (m. 4) should be considered. Possibly, the sudden and very short meter shift occurs to emphasize the trichord C-E-G#; this balances the earlier emphasis on the trichord D#-G-C#, which was stated four times within both hands in m.1. This is the only meter change that occurs in the whole collection of bagatelles; therefore, the shift is most likely simply a surface detail devoid of any major meaning.



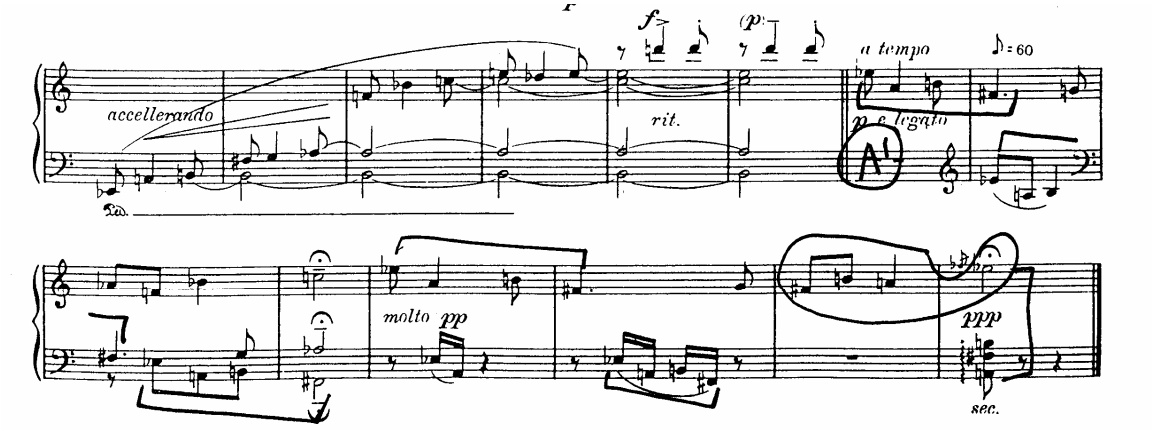
Ex. 2-20: Syncopations in the melodic line in the beginning of the bagatelle.

2.5 Bagatelle IV

The fourth, marked *Adagio* is the only slow bagatelle in the whole collection. It is in ABA′ form: the long, lyrical A section is followed by the more rhythmic B section, and a brief return of the A section. Overall, long contrapuntal lines dominate the A section; the texture becomes more homophonic in the B section (there is a suggestion of melody plus accompaniment), with clear, independent voices appearing at the end of the section. The return of the A section (A′) is brief and fragmentary. The A section has fairly regular rhythm with frequent syncopation derived from the beat displacement at the beginning of the A section (Ex. 2-20). In the B section, this character is reinforced by accents on syncopations, and by a slightly faster tempo marking.

The clearest motive in this bagatelle is the four-note gesture Eb-A-B-F#. This motive usually appears in the linear form and within one voice; most of the A′ section is built on this motive (Ex. 2-21).

Another interesting aspect of this bagatelle is the growth from two independent voices at the beginning of the A section, to five voices by the end of the B section; the



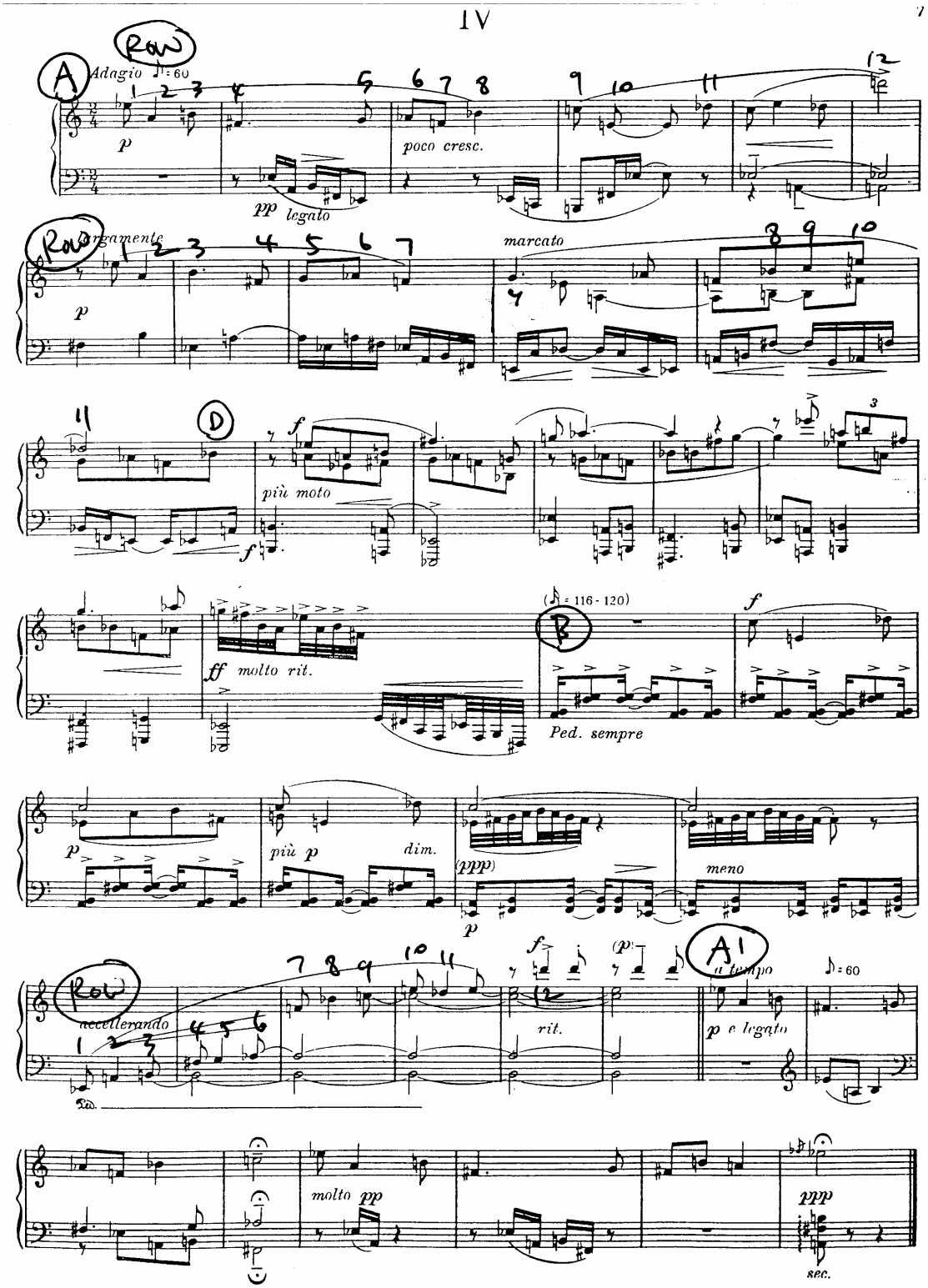
Ex. 2-21: Four-note motive Eb-A-B-F# in the A′ section.

bagatelle starts with two independent voices in m. 1, builds to three voices in m.10, four voices in m. 13, and finally five voices in m. 30.

There is only one row form used in the fourth bagatelle: Eb-A-B-F#G-Ab-F-Bb-C-E-Db-D (Ex. 2-22, the twelve-count). The row consists of three of IC 1, two each of ICs 2, 3, and 5, and one each of ICs 4 and 6 (Fig. 2-7). There are some leaps within the row (intervals 5, 6, 7, and 9), but the most frequently used intervals are ICs 1 (minor second) and 2 (major second). Two large intervals open the row.

The tetrachord Eb-A-B-F# (4-27: 0258), which is the main motive in this bagatelle, is derived from a main motive from the row in the first bagatelle--F#-A#-Eb-C (4-27: 0258) by the operation I9 (Fig. 2-8). The segmentations of the row forms from the first and the fourth bagatelle map onto each other by both I9 and RI9.

The row consists of many different trichords, but the trichord motive C-Db-E (3-3: 014) is the most emphasized; this is especially apparent when the row appears for the first time and this trichord is immediately repeated within the row. Although this trichord reappears several times, tetrachords play a more significant role as motives and important



Ex. 2-22: The twelve-count.

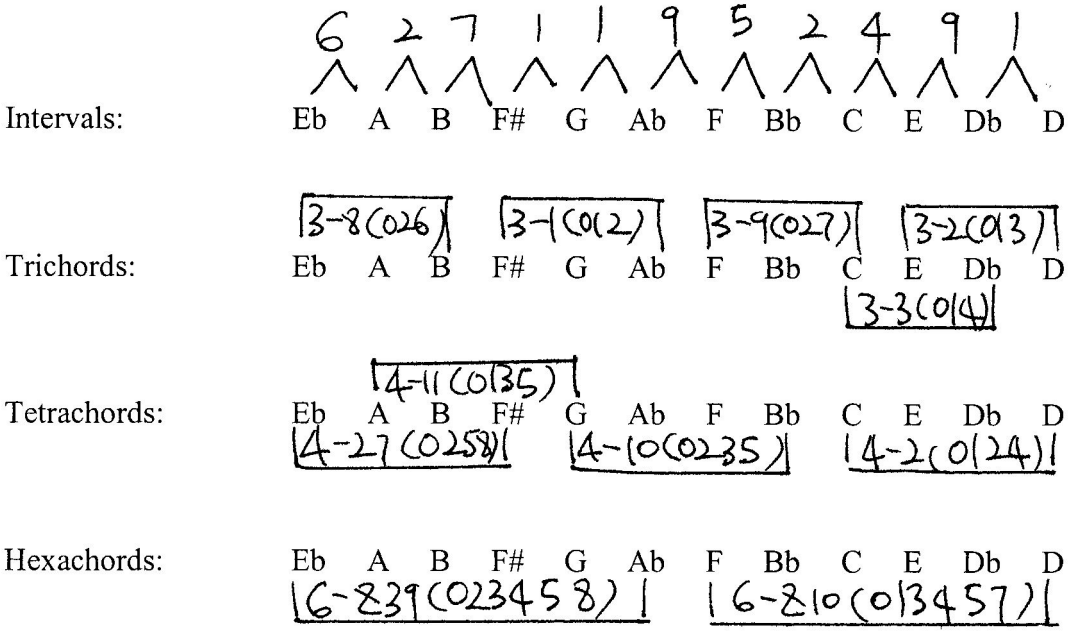


Fig. 2-7: Intervals and subsets of the row.

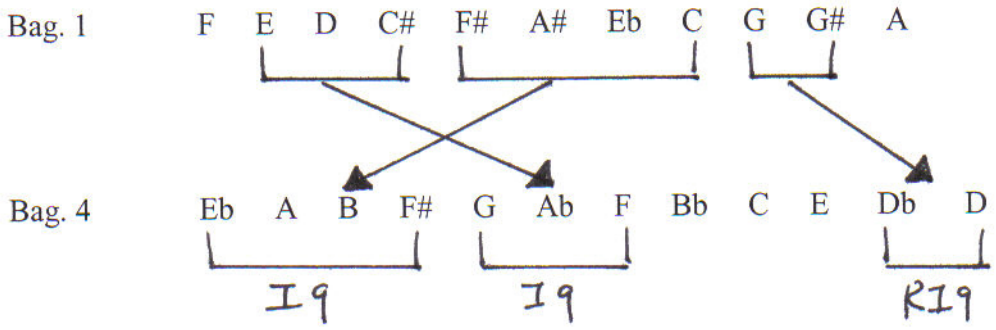
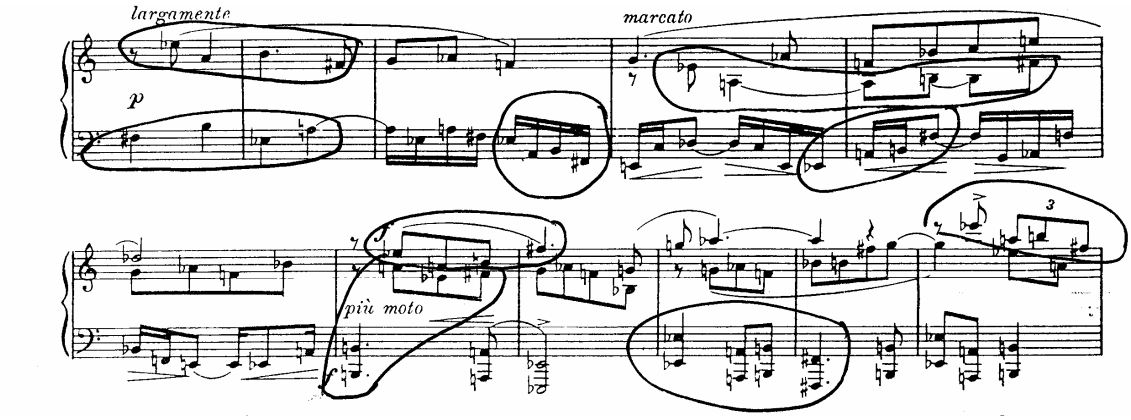


Fig. 2-8: The relationship between two row forms from Bagatelles 1 and 4.

segments. The most significant subset used throughout the bagatelle as an important motive is the tetrachord 4-27 (0258). This tetrachord, consisting of the same interval classes and pitch classes (Eb-A-B-F#) appears constantly; a few instances are shown in Ex. 2-23. Weber emphasizes this tetrachord by beginning the bagatelle with these four

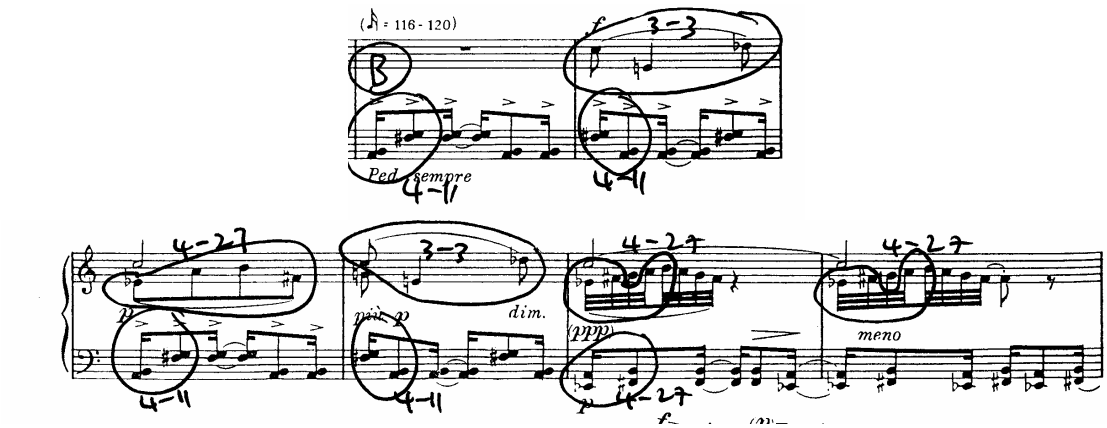


Ex. 2-23: The use of the tetrachord Eb-A-B-F#.

pitch classes, and by using them as the final chord. Another tetrachord, A-B-F#-G (4-11: 0135), although less significant, nevertheless plays an important role; this is especially true in the B section. This tetrachord is repeated in accented and syncopated form in the bass register for four measures. It is accented by the significant trichord C-Db-E (3-3) and the tetrachord Eb-A-B-F# (4-27) which repeat in the treble clef (Ex. 2-24).

The row appears as a long, lyrical melodic line in the soprano voice in its first two statements. In its next and final full statement, the row is divided among five different voices, each consisting of fragments of the row (Ex. 2-22, the twelve-count). The first and third statements of the row are complete, but the second statement (mm. 7-12) lacks D, the last PC of the row. For each row, the twelve pitch classes enter in the original order.

Determining whether or not this bagatelle is strictly twelve-tone or more freely composed is difficult. Weber lays out all twelve notes at the beginning of the piece, and there are several complete statements in the same order throughout. Nonetheless, Weber does not adhere to the strictest sense of twelve-tone composition. For example, in the

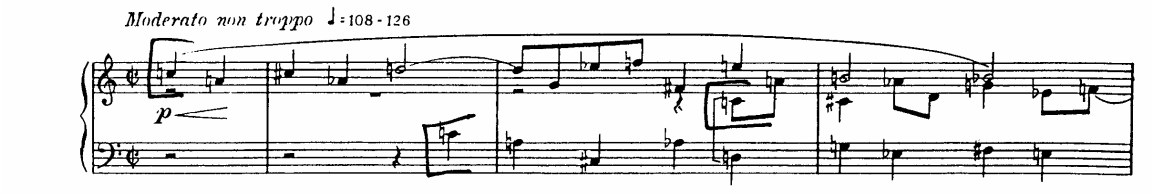


Ex. 2-24: Subsets used in the B section.

first row statement (mm. 1-6), the trichord C-E-Db repeats; in the second statement (mm. 7-12), the final D is missing; and in the third statement (mm. 26-31) the final D repeats four times. Weber is more concerned with and focused on exploiting certain subsets and motives of the row, rather than featuring the entire row.

2.6 Bagatelle V

Although no longer than the other bagatelles, the fifth bagatelle features far more intricate use of the twelve-tone technique. The last bagatelle, in 2/2 meter, is a vibrant and energetic movement. The composition is contrapuntal and chordal in the upper register; this is especially clear in the first three measures (Ex. 2-25). The entrances of the soprano, tenor, and alto voices are so distinct as to resemble fugal entries, with the same pitch classes but different rhythms and register. The second half of the bagatelle becomes more chordal in the right hand with the return of the prime row form (m. 11);



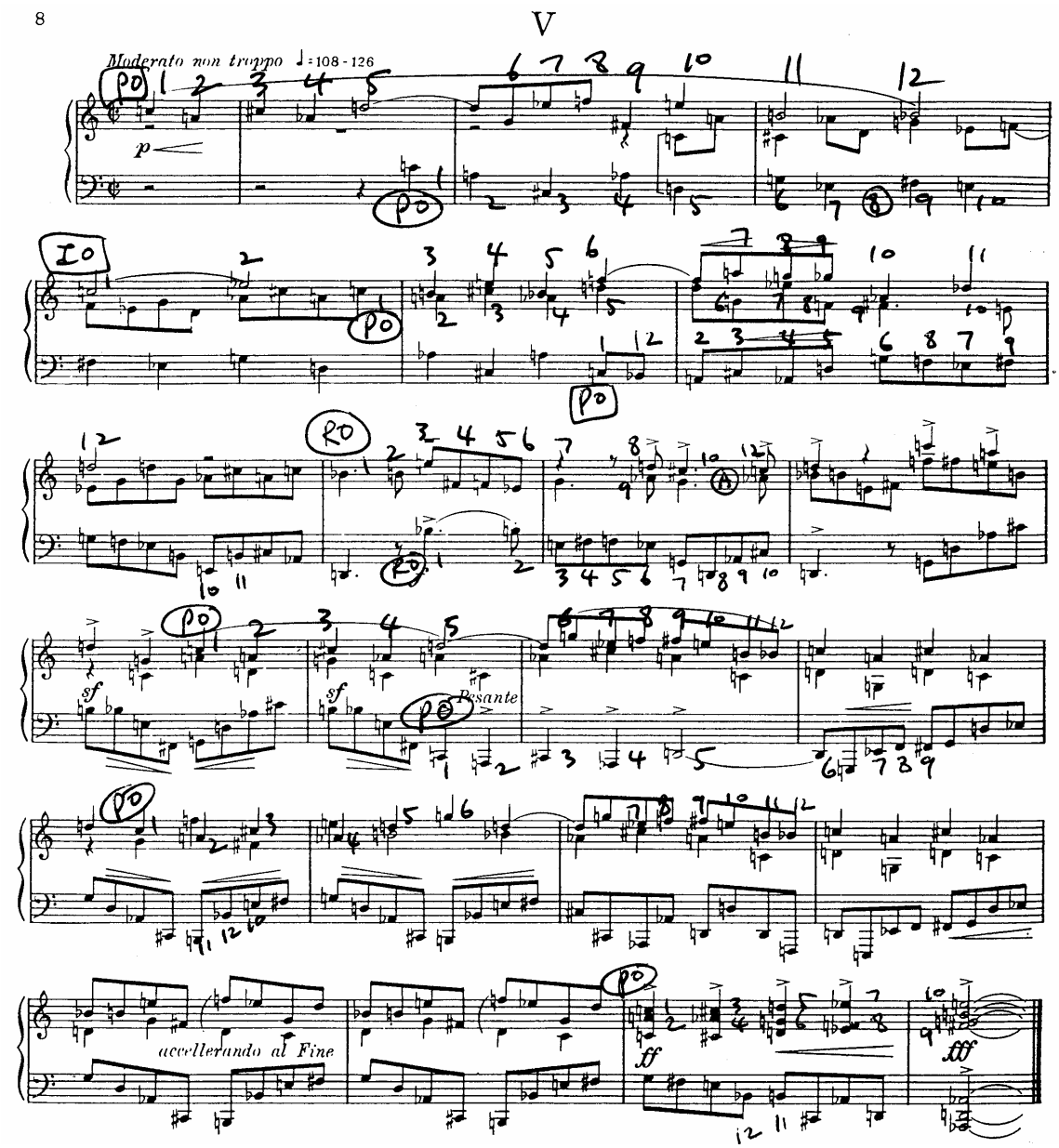
Ex. 2-25: The contrapuntal entries of three independent voices.

nevertheless, the continued independence of each voice is apparent, creating an interesting combination of contrapuntal and chordal textures.

Weber's music is known for its lyricism. This lyricism is apparent in the long phrases that embody the row forms. The melodies (row forms) are written in long and linear form, in both the soprano and tenor voices. The continuous eighth-note rhythm is the foundation of this piece; with the exception of the fugue-like entries at the beginning of the piece, a perpetual eighth-note rhythm appears continuously either in the right or left hand (especially in the latter half).

Almost every time, a row form is presented linearly within one voice in the form of long lyrical phrase (Ex. 2-25); the exception is the last two measures, in which P0 is presented vertically as chords. Each row form statement represents a fugal voice, and in most cases the entry is in one individual voice. I0, which appears only once, is an exceptionally long phrase.

This bagatelle is in two sections. The first section includes statements of three different themes (P0, I0, and R0); the second section starts with the return of P0, and throughout the second half of the piece only P0 re-appears. Therefore, P0 is the principal row form that the composer utilizes, especially in the latter half of the piece.



Ex. 2-26: The twelve-count.

The prime row form C-A-C#-Ab-D-G-Eb-F-F#-E-B-Bb appears at the beginning in the soprano voice (Ex. 2-26, the twelve-count). The row consists of two of IC 1, two of IC 2, one of IC 3, two of IC 4, three of IC 5, and one of IC 6 (Fig. 2-9); Weber

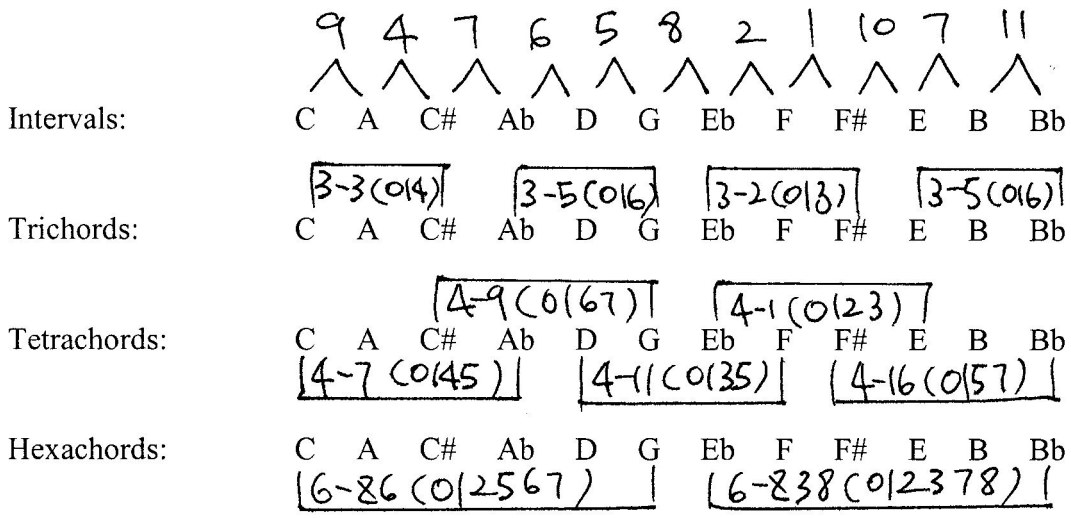
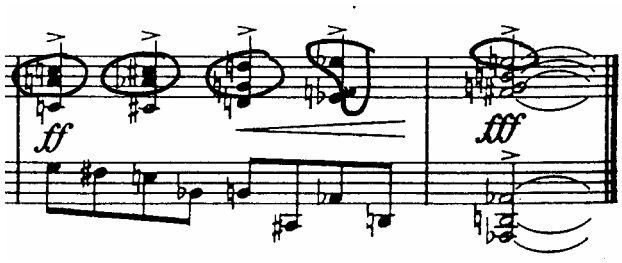


Fig. 2-9: Intervals and subsets of P0.

incorporates all the interval classes. The most interesting aspect of this row is that the interval size increases from smaller to larger intervals: interval 3 (A-C: minor third), interval 4 (A-C#: major third), interval 5 (Ab-C#: perfect fourth), interval 6 (Ab-D: tri-tone), interval 7 (G-D: perfect fifth), interval 8 (G-Eb: minor sixth), and interval 10 (F-Eb; minor seventh).

Although the row form P0 is stated only in the soprano voice in the beginning of the piece, the successive increase of intervals creates the effect of two lines moving in contrasting motion. This is especially apparent in the chordal appearance of m. 21 (Ex. 2-27) with its illusion of reaching an E octave at the end. The idea of contrasting motion has a precedent; the contrasting lines are inherent in the row form from the first bagatelle, and the row form from the last bagatelle exploits the latency of this row form (Fig. 2-10). Although this idea is apparent in the last bagatelle, it is not in the first bagatelle; it was



Ex. 2-27: The intervals create two lines moving in contrasting motion.

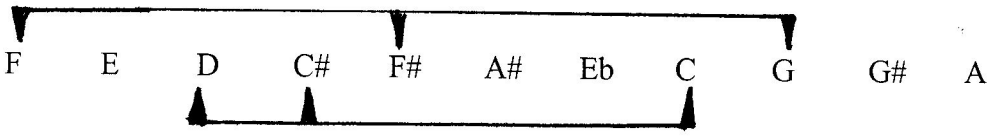


Fig. 2-10: The contrasting motion in the row from Bagatelle 1.

probably just an idea, then Weber explores the idea further within the row in the final bagatelle.

The row consists of a significant number of leaps; the first hexachord of this row consists of increasing leaps while the latter hexachord is dominated by smaller interval classes. P0 contains inversional symmetry in the tetrachord Eb-F-F#-E, which is built by interval class 2-1-2.

Discrete subsets of the row form P0 are shown in Fig. 2-9: the trichords 3-2 (013), 3-3 (014), 3-5 (016-there are two instances of this subset); tetrachords 4-7 (0145), 4-11 (0135), and 4-16 (0157); and hexachords 6-Z6 (012567), and 6-Z38 (012378). Although P0 is predominantly used throughout the piece, Weber also uses R0 (Bb-B-E-F#-F-Eb-G-D-Ab-C#-A-C), the exact retrograde version of P0 in regards to the order of interval classes and pitch classes, and I0 (C-Eb-B-E-Bb-F-A-G-F#-Ab-C#-D, Fig. 2-11). This is the only bagatelle of the collection in which Weber uses more than one row form; all

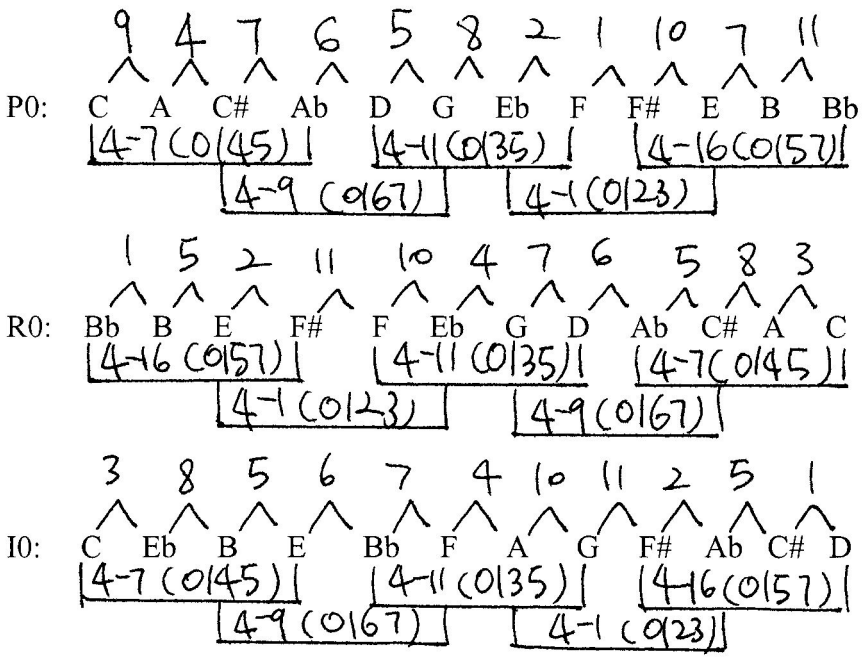


Fig. 2-11: Three row forms used in this bagatelle: P0, R0, and I0.

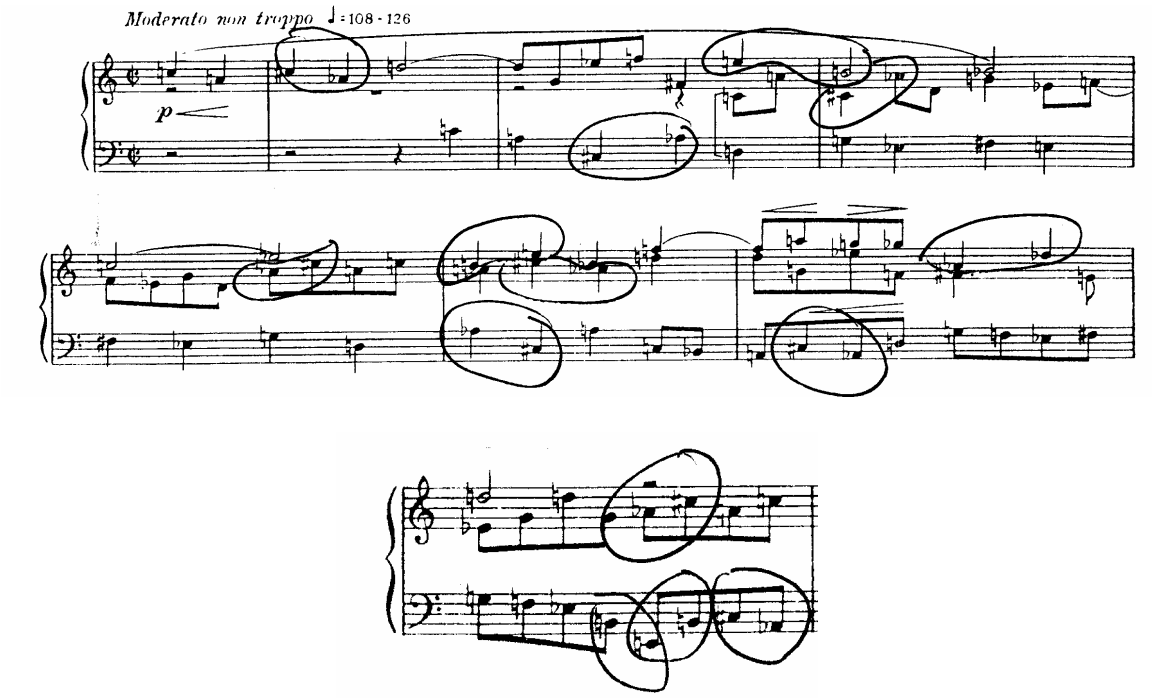
P0:	0	9	1	8	2	7	3	5	6	4	11	10
I0:	0	3	11	4	10	5	9	7	6	8	1	2

Fig. 2-12: Dyads Ab-C# and B-E.

three row forms are members of the same row class since they are related to each other by the familiar twelve-tone operations, inversion and retrograde.

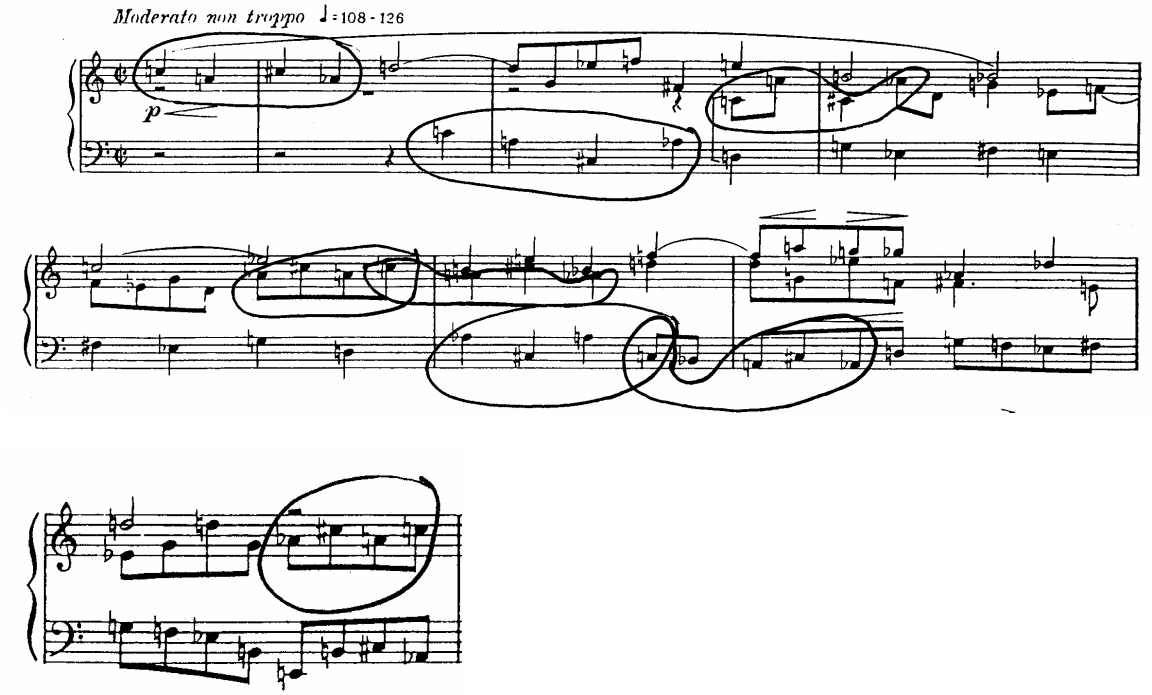
The two dyads C#-Ab and E-B (both in P0 and I0) map onto each other, thus creating a diatonic chord (C# minor-seventh chord, Fig. 2-12). This type of invariance is audible when entries of P0 and I0 are juxtaposed and these two dyads create the recurring small motive and the minor-seventh chord (4-26: 0358, Ex. 2-28).

The tetrachord segmentations are extremely important in this piece. In particular, the tetrachord C-A-C#-Ab (4-7: 0145) is heard throughout; this tetrachord is the first four

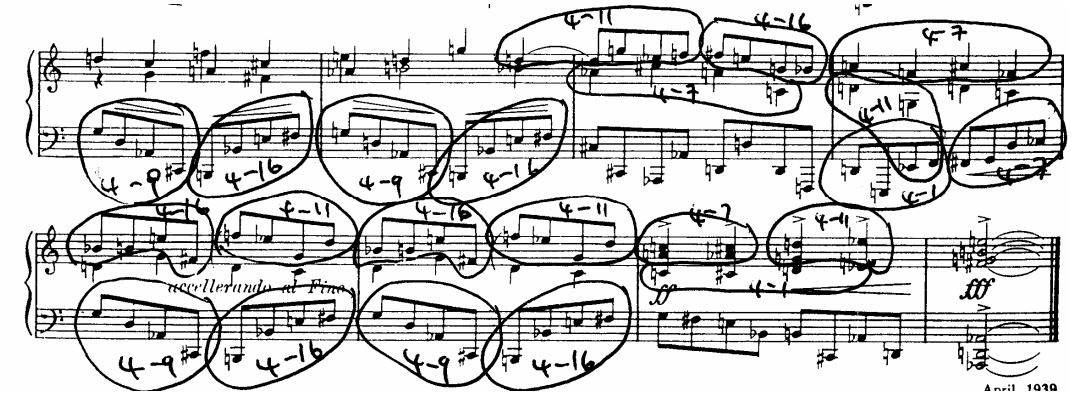


Ex. 2-28: Dyads Ab-C# and B-E.

pitch classes of P0 and almost always heard linearly within one voice (Ex. 2-29). Some of the other tetrachords frequently used are C#-Ab-D-G (4-9: 0167), all in linear form within one voice; F#-E-B-Bb (4-16: 0157), also in linear form within one voice; Eb-F-F#-E (4-1: 0123); and D-G-Eb-F (4-11: 0135, Ex. 2-30). Most of these tetrachords appear in linear form within one voice as continuous eighth-note motive. The tetrachord subsets are treated somewhat independently, and there is considerable freedom of ordering within the segments; for example, C-A-C#-Ab (4-7) appears as Ab-C#-A-C; D-G-Eb-F (4-11) as F-Eb-G-D; F#-E-B-Bb (4-16) as B-Bb-E-F# and Bb-B-E-F#; and C#-Ab-D-G (4-9) as G-D-Ab-C#.



Ex. 2-29: Tetrachord C-A-C#-Ab (4-7: 0145).



Ex. 2-30: Other tetrachords used in this bagatelle.

To sum up, the row forms used in this bagatelle appear in long phrases, like a melody, or as fugal entrances; and most frequently used segmentations, or motives appear as sets of four eighth-note rhythmic figures, within one voice.

This bagatelle is written with a fairly strict twelve-tone technique. For the most part, row forms are stated strictly and all twelve pitch classes are stated in the original order. However, there are exceptions: in mm. 5-7, Bb (12th) appears between C (1st) and A (2nd) in P0; both presentations of R0 are incomplete (R0 in the tenor voice is incomplete without A and C in mm. 8-10, and R0 in the upper register is missing A); and D and G are repeated within the statement of P0 in mm. 15-18. Neverthless, the exceptions are few and do not significantly affect the strictness of this bagatelle's serialism.

2.7 Conclusion

Weber's initial exploration of the twelve-tone technique is relatively modest in these bagatelles. In each of the first four bagatelles, Weber utilizes a single row form without exploring the row class through transposition, inversion or retrograde; only the last bagatelle shows three members of a single row class (P0, I0, and R0). The row forms are presented both within one voice and between voices; again, the last bagatelle is an exception, as the row forms are presented within one voice to create linear fugal entries.

However, the relationship between the different row forms in the five pieces is interesting. For example, Weber takes segmentations of unordered sets from the row in the first bagatelle, then he creates row forms for following bagatelles from it. The segmentations are transformed through the familiar operations—for example, in the fourth bagatelle, a dyad, a trichord, and a tetrachord are transformed by operation I9 and RI9 (Fig. 2-8). Also, some of these segmentations often become the main motive of the

row; the main motive from the row used in the fourth bagatelle Eb-A-B-F# comes from the motive F#-A#-Eb-C from the row used in the first bagatelle (Fig. 2-8). Weber is trying to place his personal stamp on Schoenberg's method by using subset and row forms that derive directly from the earliest row used in this composition.

Weber prefers to use interval classes 1 and 2 in his rows. In the first bagatelle, the row begins with ICs 1 and 2 (F-E-D-C#), which creates scalar figures, and the row form ends with same ICs. This is also evident in the fourth bagatelle, where the same interval classes are frequently used; IC 1 drives the second bagatelle, forming the first three pitches of the row form, F-F#-G. The frequent use of ICs 1 and 2 results in scalar passages, thus invoking the scale passages and sounds of tonal music; for example, the first seven pitches of the row form in the second bagatelle form the scalar passage F-F#-G-A-B-C-D.

There are formations of chords that make reference to diatonicism in these bagatelles. Triadic formations are prevalent in the first bagatelle, where the following diatonically referential structures occur: C minor, Eb minor, C half-diminished, C minor-seventh, D# minor-seventh, and F# major (Ex. 2-4). This tendency is continued in the third bagatelle, where the frequent use of dyads that denote major third (IC 4) and perfect fourth (IC 5) translate as a row form with many chordal formations embedded in it (Fig. 2-5). Chordal formations are enhanced by an accompaniment that is essentially two chords, C augmented and B minor-seventh.

The various row forms in each bagatelle share several elements: small fragments of scalar passages; frequently used ICs 1, 2, 4, and 5; and segmentations forming different diatonic chords. Interestingly, the first and second bagatelles both begin with

the pitch class F, while the third and fourth both begin with the pitch class D#. Again, the fifth bagatelle diverges from the pattern; this last piece consistently moves further and more ambitiously than the first four. It is as if, having made several essays into twelve-tone form, Weber feels more confident in exploring serialist technique in the final part of this collection.

Within the serial format, Weber focuses on segmentations, the twelve tones as creating subsets. Weber treats the row segments independently as motives building a whole piece, not just a simple row. These motives (subsets) usually occur as trichords and tetrachords; recurring throughout each piece, these become the building blocks of each bagatelle. For example, in the first bagatelle, the row is segmented into three parts: a principal four-note motive (F-E-D-C#); a five-note segmentation (F#-A#-Eb-C-G); and a two-note tag (G#-A) (Ex. 2-5). Another way of organizing subsets appears in the second bagatelle, where the row is partitioned into two main sections (the first seven pitches in the treble clef and the remaining five pitches in the bass clef). Furthermore, the bass clef is subdivided into two fragments, one of which is the most important subset of the bagatelle, the trichord Db-Bb-E (3-10: 036). Subsets are typically presented linearly; but when they appear vertically, they usually serve as an accompaniment and form diatonic chords.

In these bagatelles, the subsets are treated independently and there is a considerable freedom of ordering within repeated subsets; they are treated almost as unordered pitch class sets than ordered segments. For example, in the third bagatelle, the trichords D#-G-C# and E-G#-C, and the tetrachord A-D-F#-B are independent subsets

derived from the row which then are freely re-ordered: E-G#-C becomes C-E-G# and G#-C-E, and A-D-F#-B becomes B-D-F#-A and F#-D-A-B (Ex. 2-19).

In accordance with Schoenberg's twelve-tone system, each bagatelle lays out twelve pitches in predetermined order at the beginning of each piece (with the exception of the first bagatelle, in which Weber used the eleven-tone row form), and the subsets used throughout each piece are derived from segmentations of the row, used as both vertical and horizontal motives. However, Weber is more preoccupied with the manipulation of subsets than the repeated presentation and transformation of the row. In those few times when the row is presented, it often is missing a pitch class, pitch classes are repeated, or the order of pitch classes is reversed. And often enough, subsets derived from the row are repeated within the row presentation as well.

As a first attempt in twelve-tone composition, *Five Bagatelles* is somewhat unadventurous. Weber does not push the boundaries of row manipulation or serialist structure; rather, he establishes a modest template for what will characterize his later twelve-tone works. Weber also employs this technique freely. He uses it in his composition, but he is not governed by it; this is evident in the music that his rows are not presented in a strict manner, he puts more emphasis on the exploratory use of subsets (more common in the atonal music) than the use of rows, and he experiments with an eleven-tone row form in one of the bagatelles. This allows Weber to link the serialist technique both to the vestiges of tonal sounds and to free atonality; in the bagatelles as in future pieces, serialist technique is a vehicle for Weber's expressive needs.

CHAPTER 3: *Lyric Piece* op. 40a (1953)

3.1 Introduction

Weber's *Lyric Piece* was written in 1953, fifteen years after *Five Bagatelles* (1939). Up until the early 1950s, Weber had gravitated towards longer, multi-movement compositions for piano (for example, *Suite No. 1 for piano, Suite No. 2 for piano,* and *Fantasia (Variations)).* However, from the early 1950's until Weber's last completed piano composition, *Intermezzo* (1972), Weber's works, such as the *Lyric Piece* (1953), *New Adventure* (1956), and *Humoreske* (1958), were shorter.

As described by Arzruni, *Lyric Piece* is wonderfully serene yet complicated music and there is counterpoint throughout. Weber's music is often described as "expressive", "emotional", and "contrapuntal"; with its expressions of yearning and sadness, *Lyric Piece* is an ideal example of all of the above.

Lyric Piece employs twelve-tone technique; although Weber uses the twelve-tone technique as a tool, just as he uses contrapuntal technique for expression, the music shows many elements derived from traditional procedures, such as vertical presentation of consonant triads and octave doubling. In this way, Weber incorporates references to tonality with serialism.

Lyric Piece was recorded by Sahan Arzruni with New World Records (2001) and published by Edward B. Marks Corp.(1956) as a part of a collection "American Composers of Today: 23 piano pieces imparting appreciation of contemporary music."

This piece was described by Sahan Arzruni as following: "Ben Weber's *Lyric Piece* is songful and solemn. Conceived contrapuntally, this compact work is full of emotional reserve and expression. Although Weber himself is a proponent of the modernist twelve-tone technique, his music nevertheless sounds traditional, displaying a good measure of individuality, strength, and craftsmanship."[1]

3.2 Overview

Lyric Piece weaves three or four independent and intricate voices throughout the entire piece. The flow is continuous, with virtually no significant dynamic changes, except for the end of the B section, where the brief moment of chordal texture is the climax of the piece.

Lyric Piece is in ABA′B′ form: A returns in an extended form and the piece concludes with a brief return of B. Structurally, the piece is divided by the use of different melodies--P4 and I4, respectively in the A and B sections. These two row forms are exclusive, and the piece clearly divides into different sections depending on which row form the music is based on.

[1] Sahan Arzruni, *Childhood Memories: Music for Young Pianists* (New World Records: New York, NY, 2002), extracted from "Notes by Sahan Arzruni."

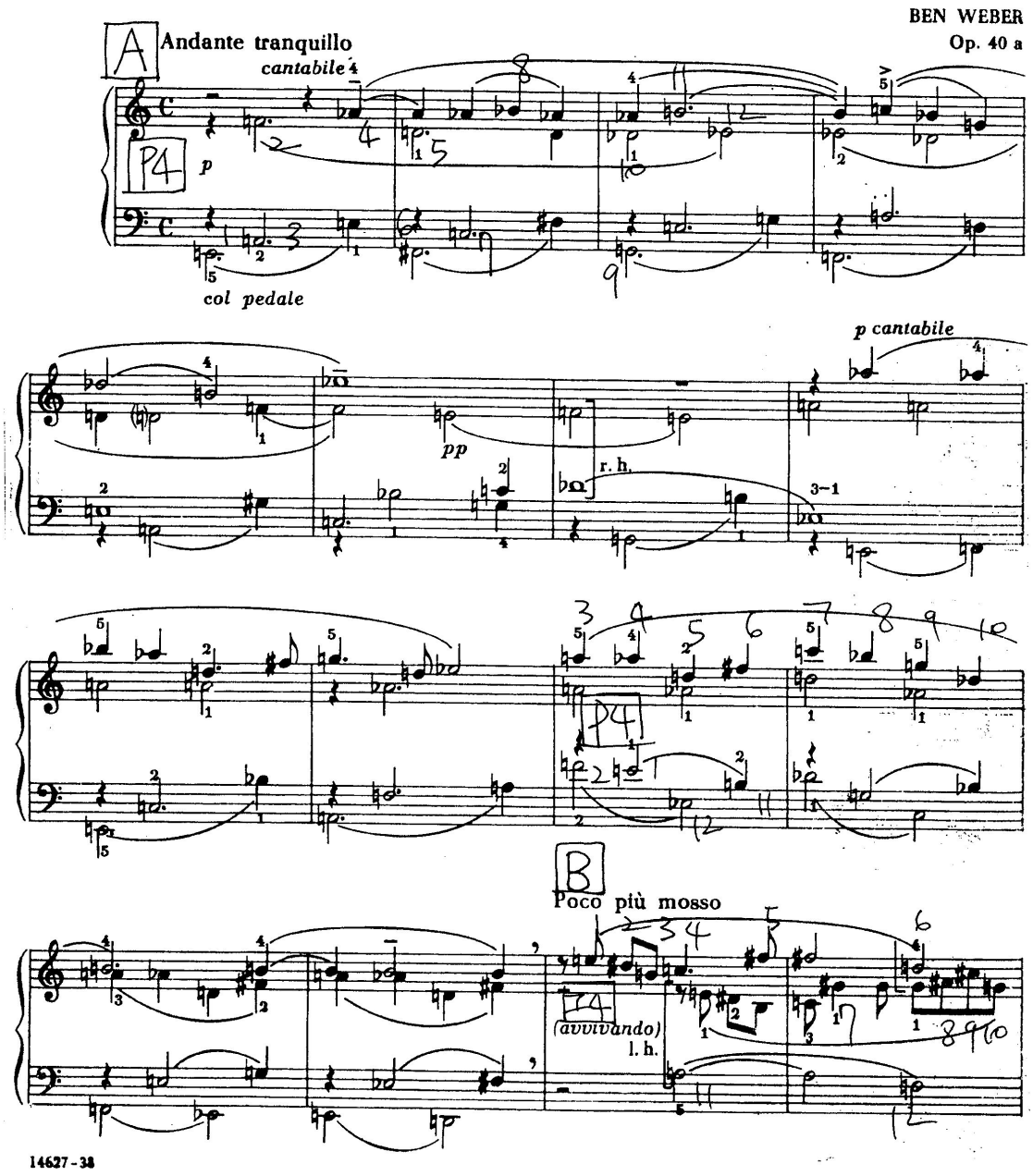
3.3 Twelve-tone analyses

The two row forms used in this piece (Ex. 3-1, the twelve-count) are P4 (E-F-A-Ab-D-F#-C-Bb-G-Db-B-Eb) and I4 (E-D#-B-C-F#-D-G#-A#-C#-G-A-F). There is only one row class; therefore, when partitioned into segments, the row forms share subsets (Fig. 3-1). The twelve-count (Ex. 3-1) shows that the row is only used explicitly at certain points in the piece. The rest of the music is derived from the row in less explicit ways: there are independent segments of the row taken directly from P4 or I4, such as discrete tetrachords 4-7 (0145) and 4-24 (0248); segmentations related by transposition or inversion; and pairs of notes or single intervals, such as E-F, F-A, and B-Eb.

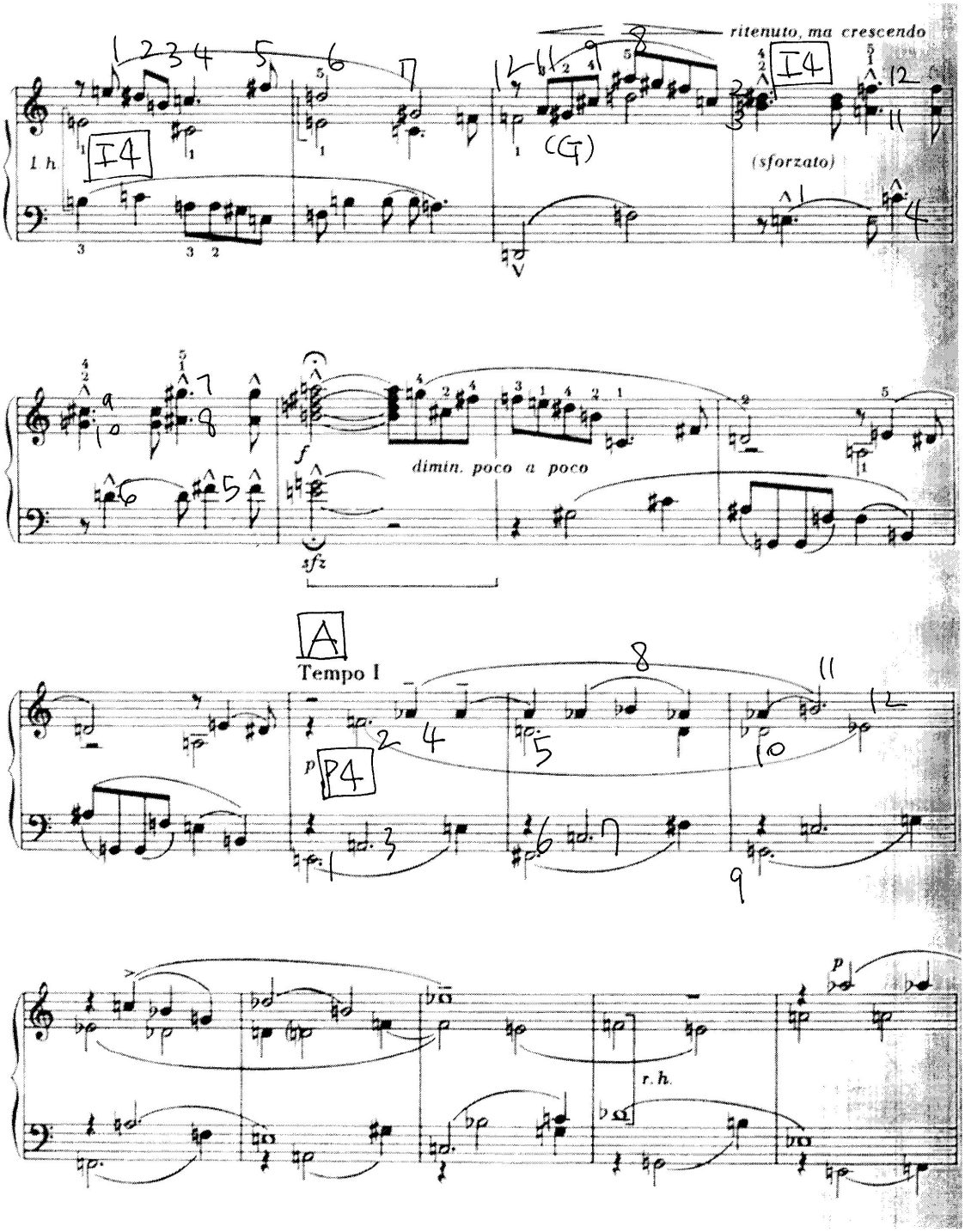
P4 and I4 are related to each other through segmented invariance and inversional symmetry (Fig. 3-2). Fig. 3-2 shows the invariance of the trichord Bb-G-Db (A#-C#-G, 3-10:036), the dyads F-A (A-F) and B-Eb (D#-B), and the tetrachord Ab-D-F#-C (C-F#-D-G#, 4-25:0268). The trichord and the tetrachord mentioned above share the pitch class properties between versions; these invariants (the trichord and the tetrachord mentioned above) indicate a purposeful relationship between P4 and I4, but as the row forms never appear together, the significance of this correlation is questionable.

Another invariance seems more significant; the two dyads mentioned above map onto each other between P4 and I4. In the music, the dyads functions in three different ways: whenever P4 appears, the dyad F-A lines up vertically (see m. 1 in Ex. 3-1); in I4, F-A is separated as an accompaniment figure (see mm. 15-16 in Ex. 3-1); and occasionally the dyads F-A and B-Eb are put together as a tetrachordal motive (see mm. 11 and 20 in Ex. 3-1). According to Joseph Straus, this kind of invariance (two dyads

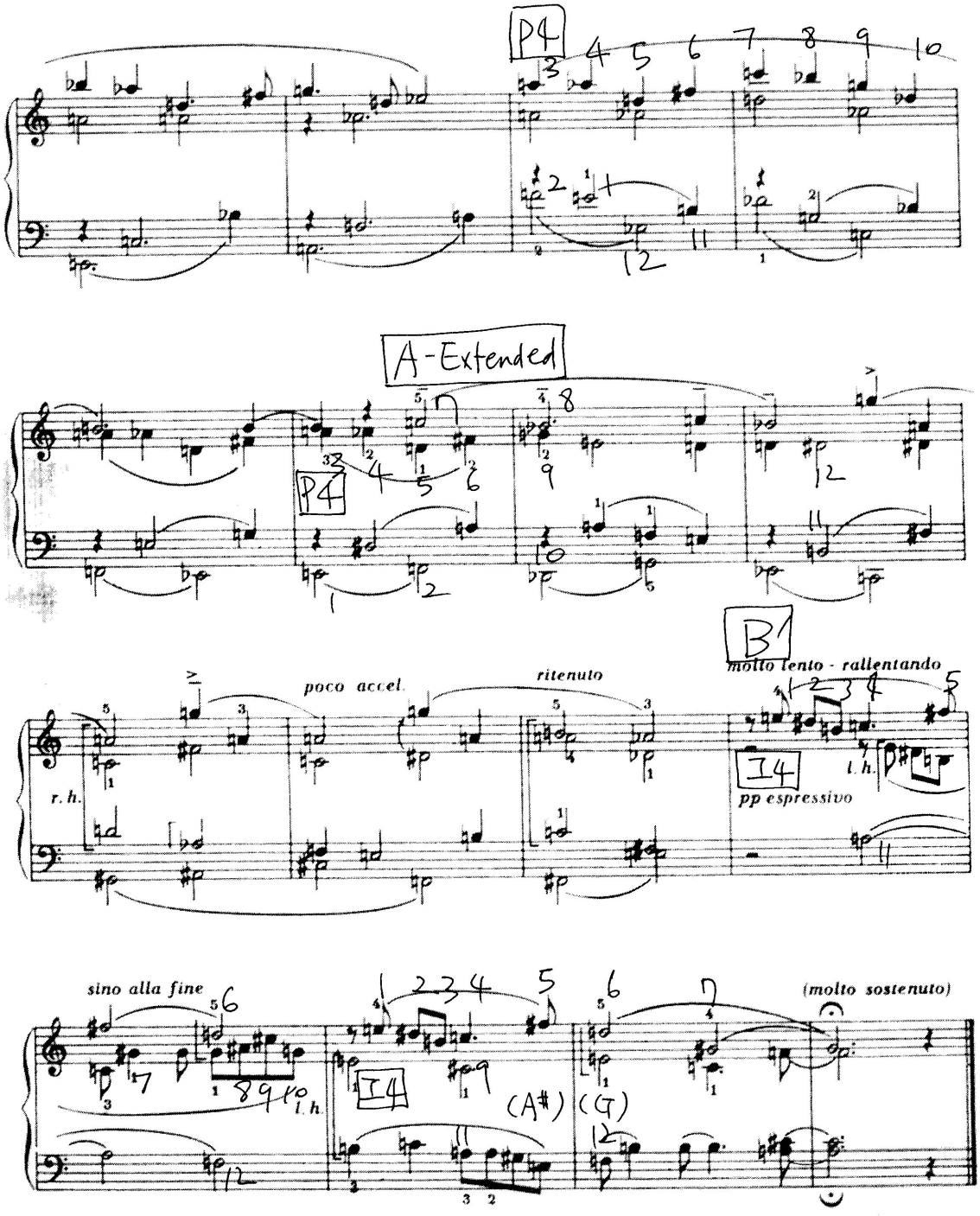
Lyric Piece



Ex. 3-1: The twelve-count.



Ex. 3-1: The twelve-count continued.



Ex. 3-1: The twelve-count continued.

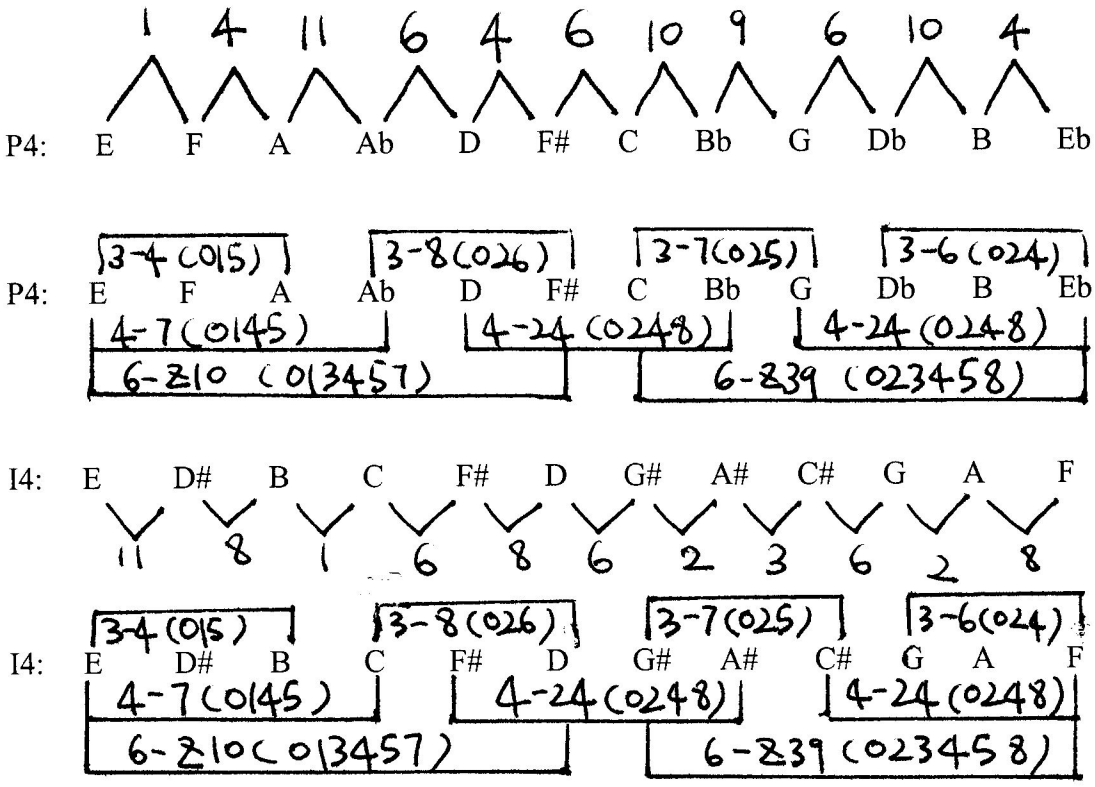


Fig. 3-1: Interval contents and subsets of P4 and I4.

mapping onto each other) creates an associative path through the music; Schoenberg used it for associative purposes in the String Quartet No. 4, third movement.[2]

The tetrachord Ab-D-F#-C is inversionally symmetrical. In P4, it contains interval classes 6-4-6, which remain the same when reversed; the same tetrachord C-F#-D-G# is also found in I4. Interestingly, this particular tetrachord (4-25:0268) is presented in vertical form within P4 (Ex. 3-2) and in linear form within I4 (Ex. 3-3). Therefore, although the intervals are symmetrical despite the inversion, a different deployment of this subset emphasizes the differentiation between two different rows and formal sections.

[2] Joseph Straus, *Introduction to Post-Tonal Theory*, 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2000), 158.

P4: 4 5 9 8 2 6 0 (10 7 1) 11 3

I4: 4 3 11 0 6 2 8 (10 1 7) 9 5

.....

P4: 4 5 9 (8 2 6 0) 10 7 1 11 3

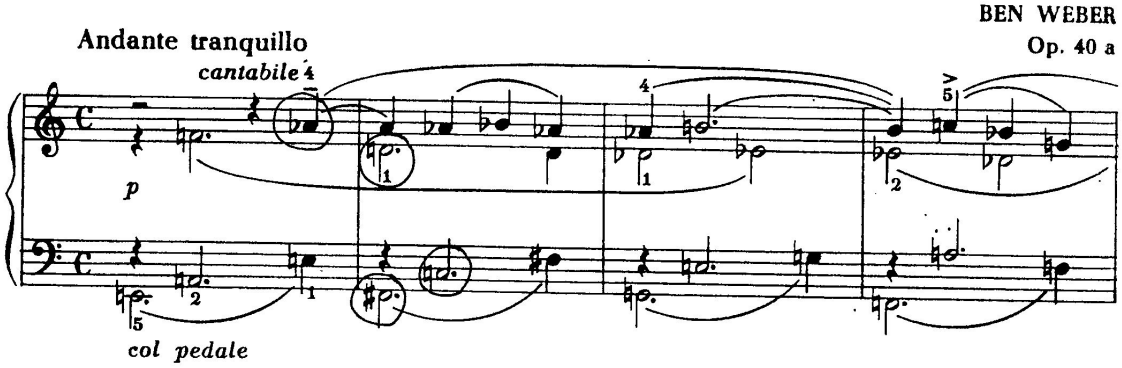
I4: 4 3 11 (0 6 2 8) 10 1 7 9 5

.....

P4: 4 5 9 8 2 6 0 10 7 1 11 3

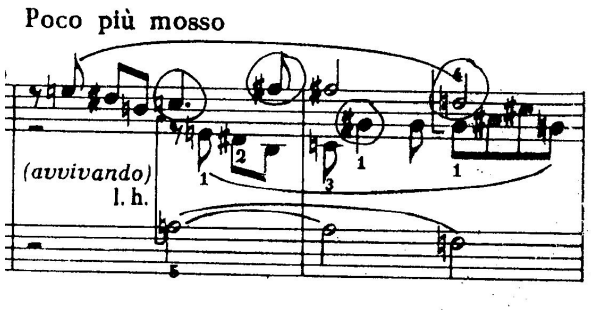
I4: 4 3 11 0 6 2 8 10 1 7 9 5

Fig. 3-2: Segmental invariance of the trichord Bb-G-Db, two dyads F-A and B – Eb, and the tetrachord Ab-D-F#-C.

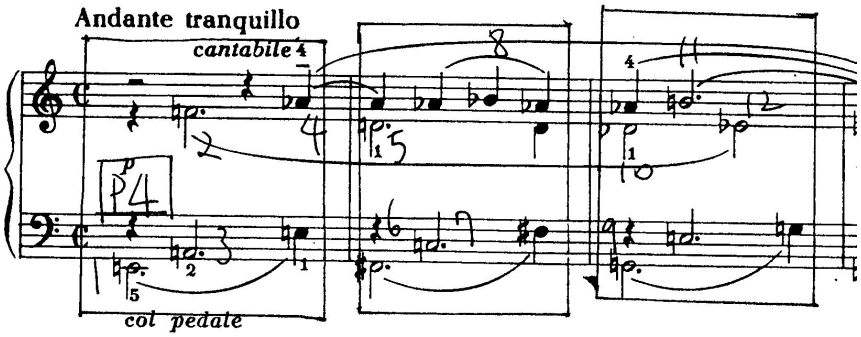


Ex. 3-2: Tetrachord Ab-D-F#-C in vertical form.

The interval contents of both row forms are: two of IC 1, two of IC 2, one of IC 3, three of IC 4, and three of IC 6. Notice that there is no use of IC 5 (perfect fourth/fifth);



Ex. 3-3: Tetrachord C-F#-D-G# in linear form.

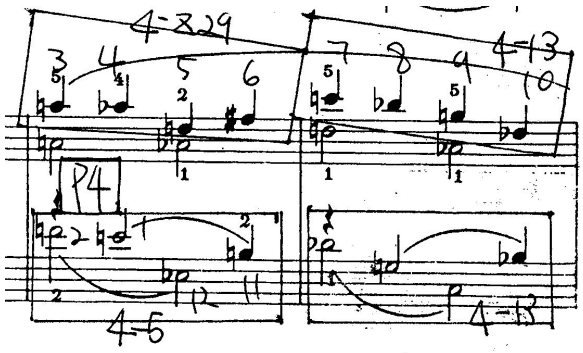


Ex. 3-4: Three discrete tetrachords of P4 appear in mm. 1-3.

and ICs 4 (major third) and 6 (tritone) are used the most. Smaller intervals such as ICs 1 and 2 are favored as well.

The two row forms share discrete subsets (this is evident in Fig. 3-1). P4 appears in the first three measures of the piece, and each discrete tetrachord—E-F-A-Ab, D-F#-C-Bb, and G-Db-B-Eb—is in each respective measure (Ex. 3-4). The assigning of a single tetrachord to a single measure indicates that Weber is experimenting with the partitioning of the row form into tetrachords. Such division also allows Weber to use the tetrachord subsets as motivic units.

Non-discrete subsets used in this piece include: the trichord 3-2: 013 in soprano and bass (mm.1-3), the tetrachord 4-2: 0124 in alto voice (mm. 1-3), and the trichord 3-

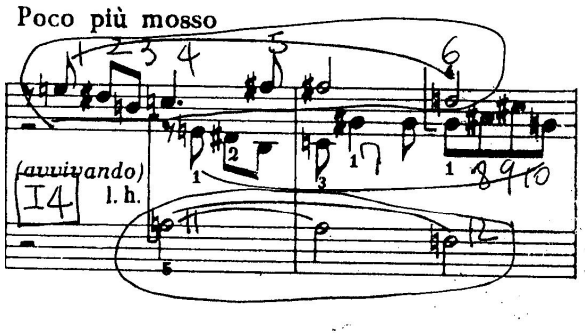


Ex. 3-5: More linear presentation of P4 in the A section.

11: 037 in tenor voice (mm.1-3); trichords used in the climax at the end of the B section, 3-5: 016 and 3-11: 037 (mm. 20-21); and tetrachords used throughout the piece as segmented motives, 4-2: 0124,4-5: 0126, 4-13: 0136, 4-19: 0148, 4-22: 0247, 4-25: 0268, and 4-Z29: 0137.

There are four independent voices present in the first three measures of the piece and the row form is divided among all four voices. In *Five Bagatelles*, the row was often stated within one voice as a long melody, or the row was divided into two voices in the character of melody with accompaniment. This is not the case in *Lyric Piece*. Each of the four voices has almost equal numbers of the pitch classes in the row form; the presentation is thus vertical because the pitch classes jump between the voices.

When P4 reappears within the A section, it is in more linear and melodic form, which is typical of the *Five Bagatelles* (Ex. 3-5). This approach continues as I4 appears in the B section; Weber puts the majority of the row form in the upper voice as melody, while the remainder of the row form sits in the other voices as accompaniment figures.

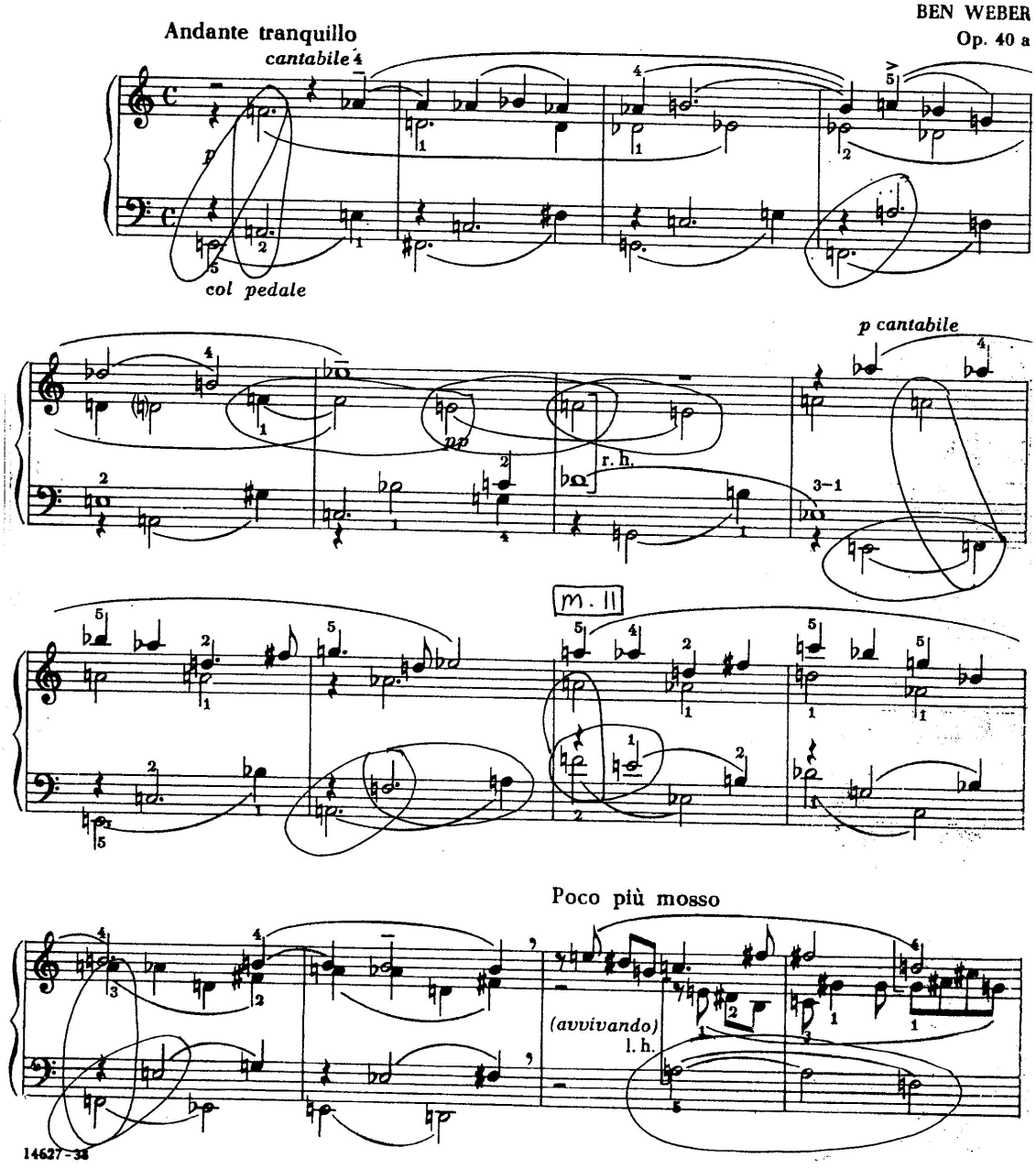


Ex. 3-6: Melodic and accompanimental figures in I4.

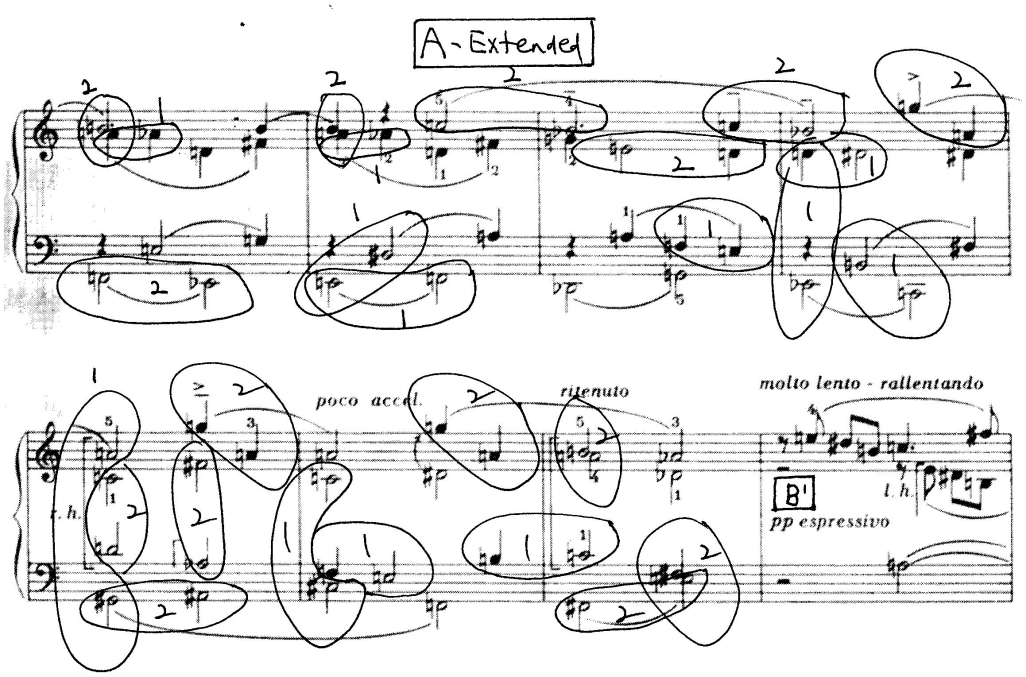
The first six pitch classes of I4 serve as a melody in the soprano voice, and the last two pitch classes are an accompaniment (Ex. 3-6).

Certain notes and intervals are used as motives. The dyads E-F and F-A (the first three pitch classes of P4), which consist of interval classes of 1 and 4, appear frequently (Ex. 3-7). As mentioned before, F-A appears as an accompanimental figure when I4 is presented in the beginning of the B section. When P4 is presented in mm. 11-12, F appears before E; this pitch class order change juxtaposes F and A vertically for more emphasis. The interval class 1 is emphasized again at the end of the B section; this time as E-D# instead of E-F, which are the first and last pitch classes of P4.

Weber also experiments with ICs 1 (minor second) and 2 (major second) as motives, which are embedded everywhere in some sections of the piece. An example of this is in the extended section of the return of the A section (mm. 39-44); this extension at the end of the piece signals a significant exploration of ICs 1 and 2 (Ex. 3-8). The emphasis on these two intervals is striking here, especially the dyads of IC 2 (C-Bb and G-A) as emphasized through repetition.



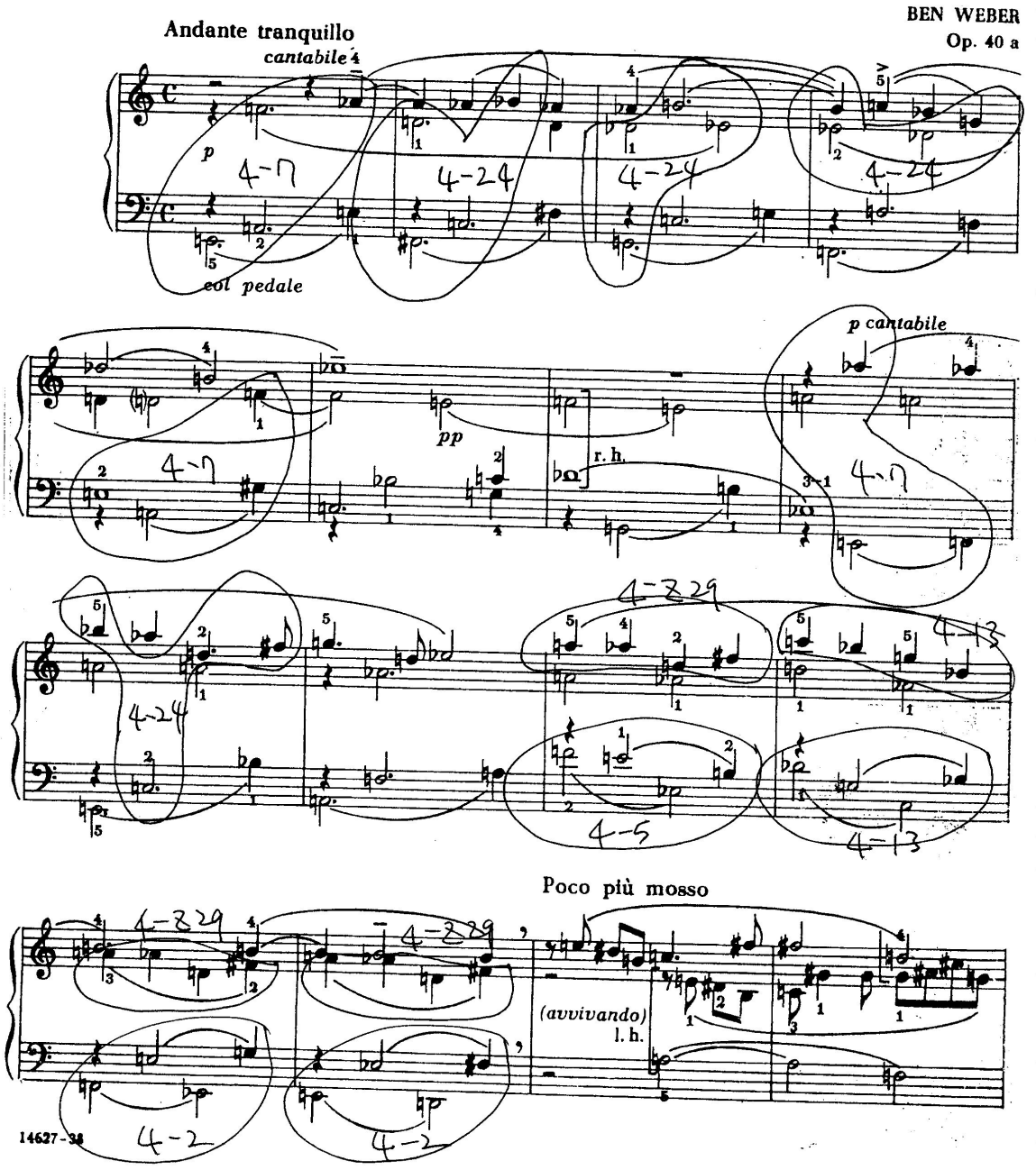
Ex. 3-7: Dyads E-F (interval class 1) and F-A (interval class 4).



Ex. 3-8: Motives of interval classes 1 and 2 at the end of the return of the A section.

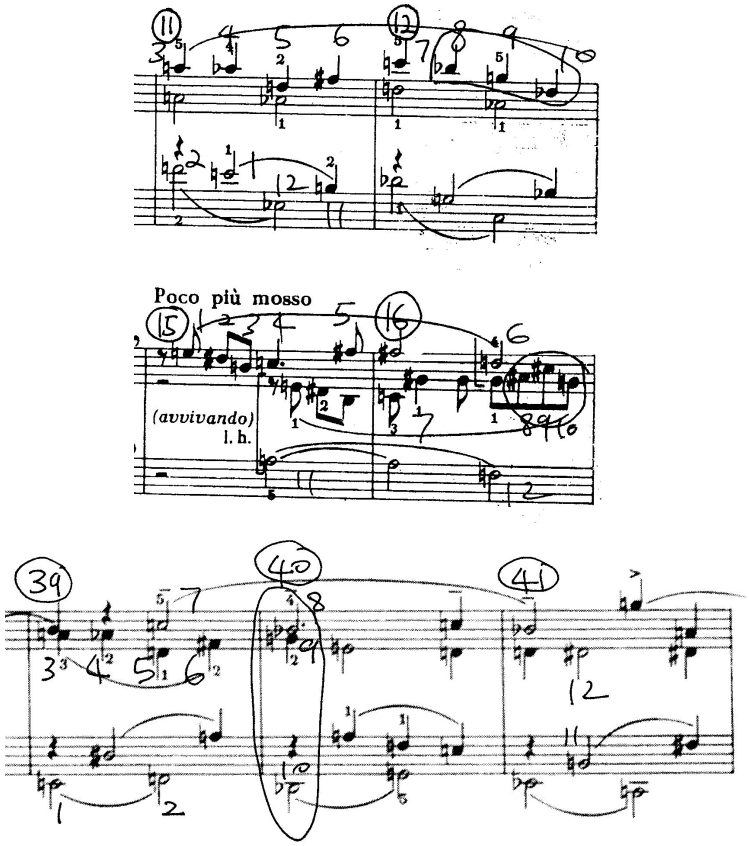
The most common motives used throughout the piece are tetrachords; specifically the discrete tetrachords 4-7: 0145 and 4-24: 0248. These two tetrachords consist mainly of intervals 1, 2, and 4; because these are most often used tetrachords, this results in the frequent appearance of ICs 1, 2, and 4 (as seen in Ex. 3-7 and 3-8). These discrete tetrachords appear more in the A section than in the B section (Ex. 3-9). Some of the other tetrachords used as motives in this piece are 4-2: 0124, 4-13: 0136, and 4-Z29: 0137 (Ex. 3-9). These tetrachords also consist of ICs 1, 2, and 4, as do the discrete tetrachords.

There are many examples of chordal formations in this piece: the non-discrete tetrachord Bb-G-Db (3-10: 036) forms a G diminished chord; the tenor voice from mm.



Ex. 3-9: Tetrachords used as motives.

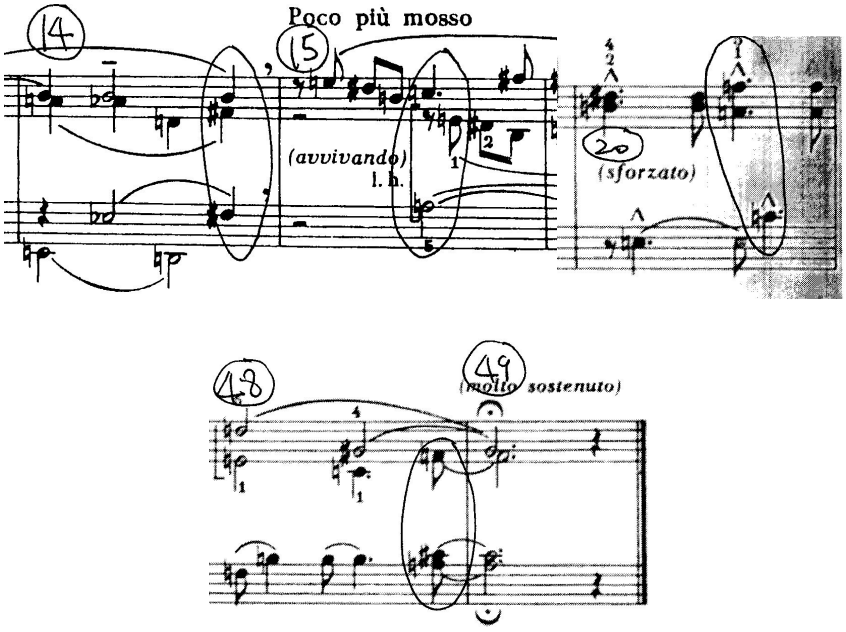
1-3 has the pitch classes A-C-E (3-11: 037), which forms A minor chord; and there is an octave doubling in the bass voice (E-F#-G-F, 4-1: 0123) when P4 is stated in the beginning of each A section. Additionally, there is a tertian eleventh-chord at the end of



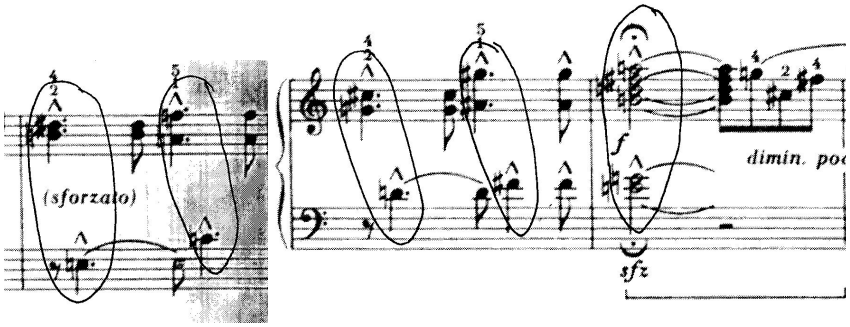
Ex. 3-10: 3-10: 036, G diminished-chord.

the B section, which hints at post-Romantic harmony. Many examples of triads are embedded vertically in the piece, as if to suggest harmony as opposed to melody.

The G diminished chord (3-10: 036) appears both vertically and horizontally within the music (Ex. 3-10: mm. 11-12, 15-16, and 39-41). Other diatonic triads appear vertically throughout the piece, clearly underscoring the tonal sound of the music. For example, there is a B minor chord (3-11: 037) in m. 14, an A minor chord (3-11: 037) in m. 15, an F major chord (3-11: 037) in m. 20, and an F augmented chord (3-12: 048) in the final two measures (Ex. 3-11: mm. 14, 15, 20, and 48-49). The climax at the end of the B section is the only chordal section in this piece; at the end of the series of chords,



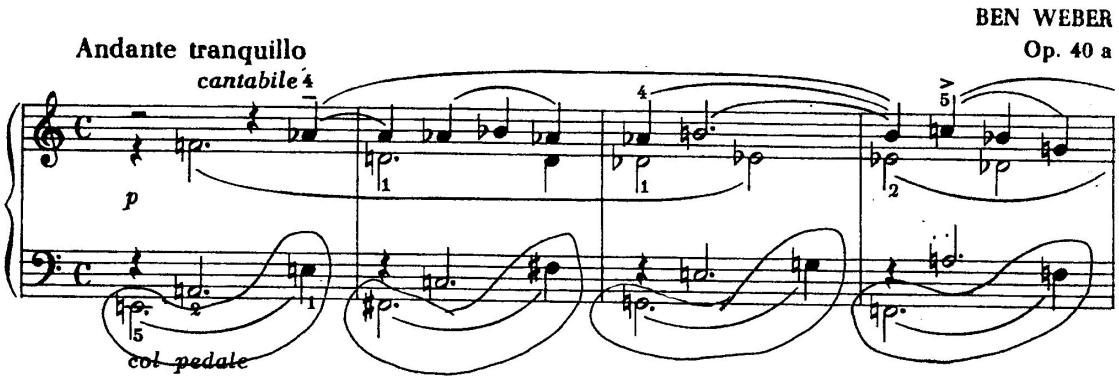
Ex. 3-11: Triadic formations in vertical form.



Ex. 3-12: Tertian eleventh-chord.

thirds are stacked up in an eleventh chord (Ex. 3-12). This section is particularly noteworthy because this chordal section comes as a shock after the continuous contrapuntal music that preceded it.

In *Lyric Piece*, Weber uses octave doubling to emphasize a particular pitch-class set; at the beginning of each A section, the bass displays octave doublings with pitch



Ex. 3-13: Octave doublings.

classes E-F#-G-F (4-1: 0123) in linear form, also presenting chromatic scale E-F-F#-G (Ex. 3-13). The result is an increased sense of importance for that motivic unit and emphases on each of four pitch classes.

3.4 Conclusion

As evident from the analysis of *Lyric Piece*, Weber remained much influenced by the sounds of tonality. Although the twelve-tone system was developed to eradicate tonal implications, not all of the practitioners of serialism were equally uninterested in the tonal sound.

Weber used Schoenberg's twelve-tone technique as a formal basis for his compositions, but he deliberately challenged the principles of the twelve-tone technique for his individual style.

Weber states each row form within each section a few times, but otherwise he is constantly exploring row form-derived motives. When the row forms are presented, pitch

classes are often repeated, and sometimes the order of pitch classes changes; often one or two pitch classes are left out (Ex. 3-1). Therefore, *Lyric Piece* is a freely written twelve-tone composition. Specifically, "freely written" indicates a casual (not strict) application of technique or form. Yet in Weber's case, underlying that casual approach is a distinct interest in undermining the very principles which the system was created to promote.

CHAPTER 4: *Humoreske* op. 49 (1958)

4.1 Introduction

Humoreske was composed in 1958, five years after the composition of *Lyric Piece* (1953). Together with compositions such as *Lyric Piece*, *New Adventure*, and *Intermezzo*, the *Humoreske* is one of the later and shorter works composed for the piano.[1] Unlike the more slow-paced and serious setting of *Lyric Piece*, *Humoreske* is freer, more playful, and more rhythmic, and is played at a faster tempo.

The style of a humoreske is like that of a "scherzo", but less grotesque and more melodious. The typical nature of a composition with the musical title "humoreske" is characterized by strongly marked rhythm and frequent repetition of short-breathed tunes.[2] This is mostly true in *Humoreske*. Frequent repetition of a small motive of two sixteenth-notes provides the foundation, and the general impression is pleasant and melodious.

Humoreske was originally recorded by Robert Helps and released by the RCA Red Seal label in 1966.[3] The piece was published in a volume titled *New Music for the Piano* edited by Joseph Prostakoff by Lawson-Gould (New York) in 1963. The first recording from 1966 includes all twenty-four compositions from this published volume by Prostakoff.

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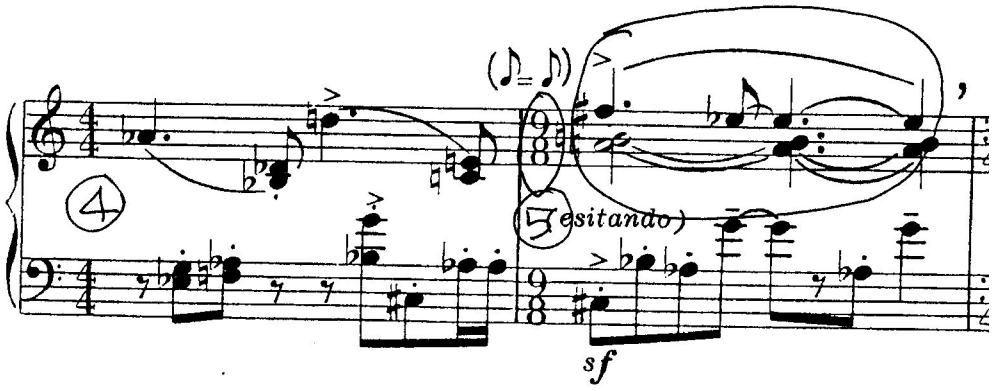
[1] *Intermezzo* is the only work for piano completed after *Humoreske.*
[2] Maurice J. E. Brown, 'Humoreske', *Grove Music Online* edited by L. Macy (Accessed November 1, 2007), <http: //www.Grovemusic.com>
[3] The same recording was re-released by CRI in 1971, and then it was released again as a CRI Archival Release in 2001, titled *New Music for the Piano*.

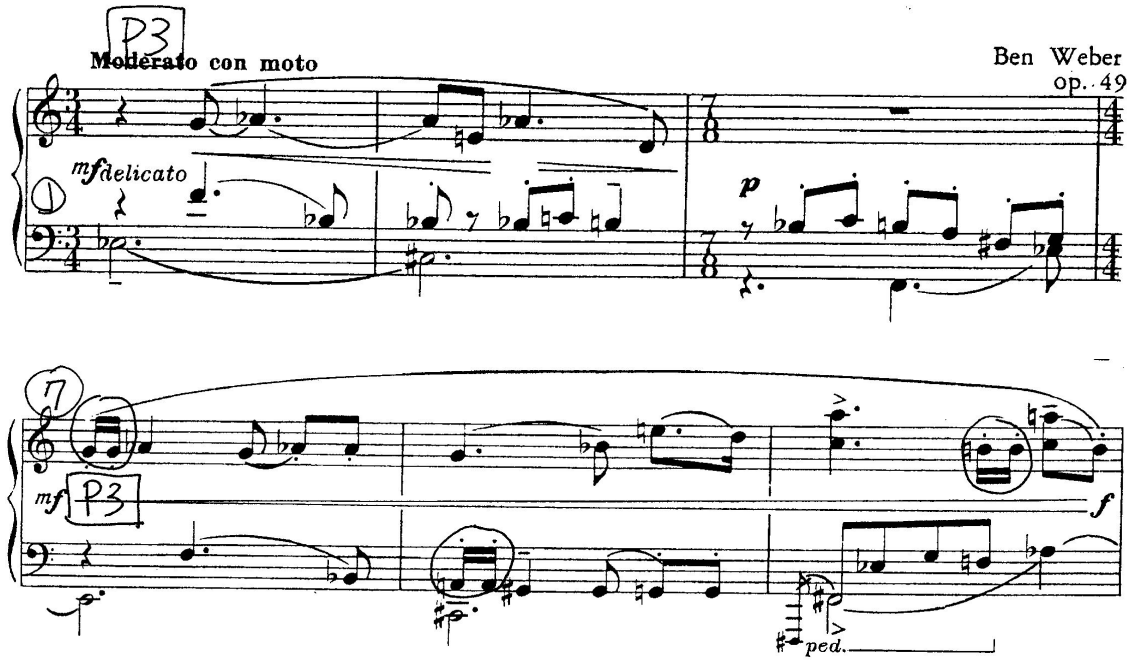


Ex. 4-1: B-D#-F#-A emphasized with extra eighth-note in measure 5.

4.2 Overview

The form of this piece is ABCC'A'C'. Structurally, row forms P3, I3 and RI3 are explored in the A section; new row forms such as R5 and RI7 appear in the B section; and the C section presents row forms RI4 and RI5 along with a few other row forms. When sections A and C return later in the piece, the A section focuses on P3 and the C section focuses on RI4 and RI5. Each time the A section and the C section return, the repetitions are always somewhat varied, and each time a particular row form is repeated, the repetitions are varied as well.

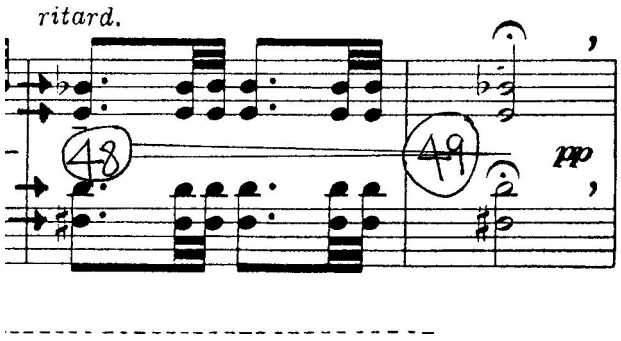
There is significant metric and rhythmic freedom in this piece. First of all, there are frequent metric shifts; the time signature varies between 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4, and there are a few occurrences of 7/8 and 9/8. The music is based mostly on simple meters, but Weber uses 9/8 to emphasize a reference to tonality; there is a long sustained B-D#-F#-A chord (B dominant seventh-chord) in the upper voices in m. 5, and Weber adds an extra eighth-note (from 4/4 in m. 4 to 9/8 in m. 5) to emphasize the chord (Ex. 4-1). Secondly,



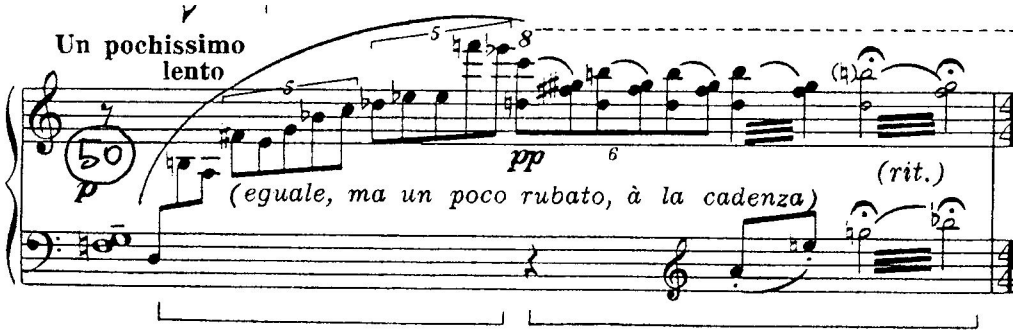
Ex. 4-2: Rhythmic statement of P3 in measure 7.

the cadenza-like section in m. 50 with fermata at the end of the measure adds a sense of freedom of time to this piece.

Rhythm is an important aspect throughout the piece. A motive consisting of a pair of two repeated sixteenth-notes recurs; for example, the third statement of P3 (m. 7) in the A section is more rhythmic than the first statement (m. 1) due to the addition of this type of motive (Ex. 4-2). Weber also uses and emphasizes this motive in the measures leading into the cadenza, but he uses a pair of two thirty second-notes instead of sixteenths. Another rhythmic characteristic of this piece is running sixteenth-notes—this is different from a motive of a pair of two repeated sixteenth-notes mentioned earlier, which are mostly repeated PC. This is used especially with scalar passages, helping to add more vibrancy, playfulness, and energy to the piece.

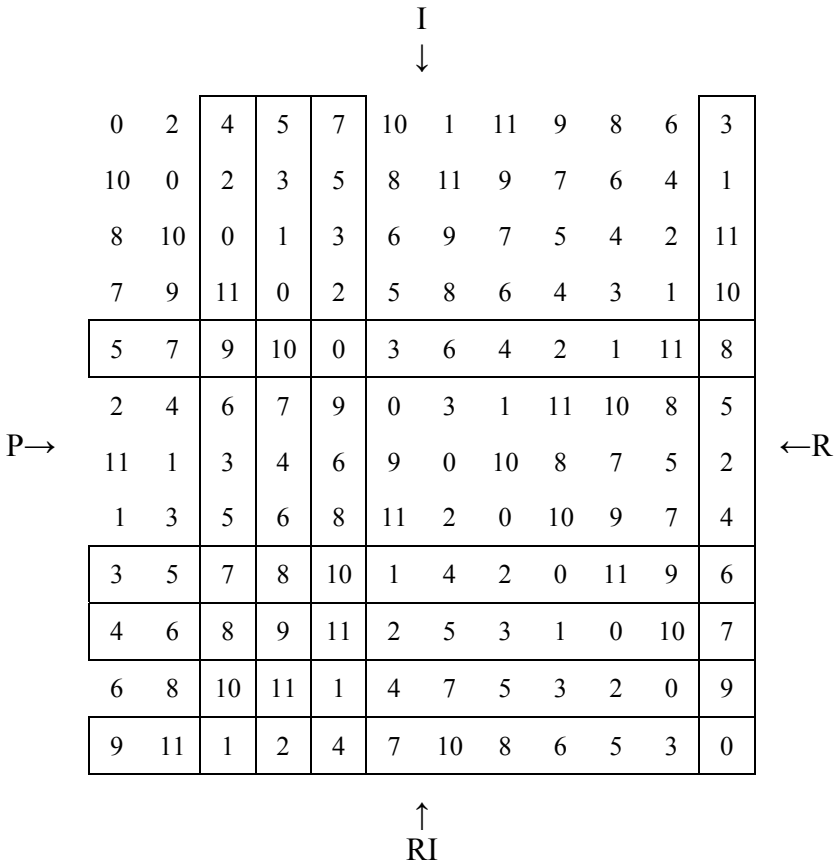


Ex. 4-3: Four voices in chordal texture in mm. 48-49.



Ex. 4-4: Cadenza-like section in measure 50.

The writing in *Humoreske* is very contrapuntal; three-voice polyphony is used throughout. The exception occurs in mm. 48-49, just before the cadenza, where there are four clear voices; but these voices do not appear in contrapuntal texture, rather, they appear in chordal texture (Ex. 4-3). This brief chordal section is followed by a wonderful little cadenza-like measure at m. 50 (Ex. 4-4), which contrasts with the rest of the piece.

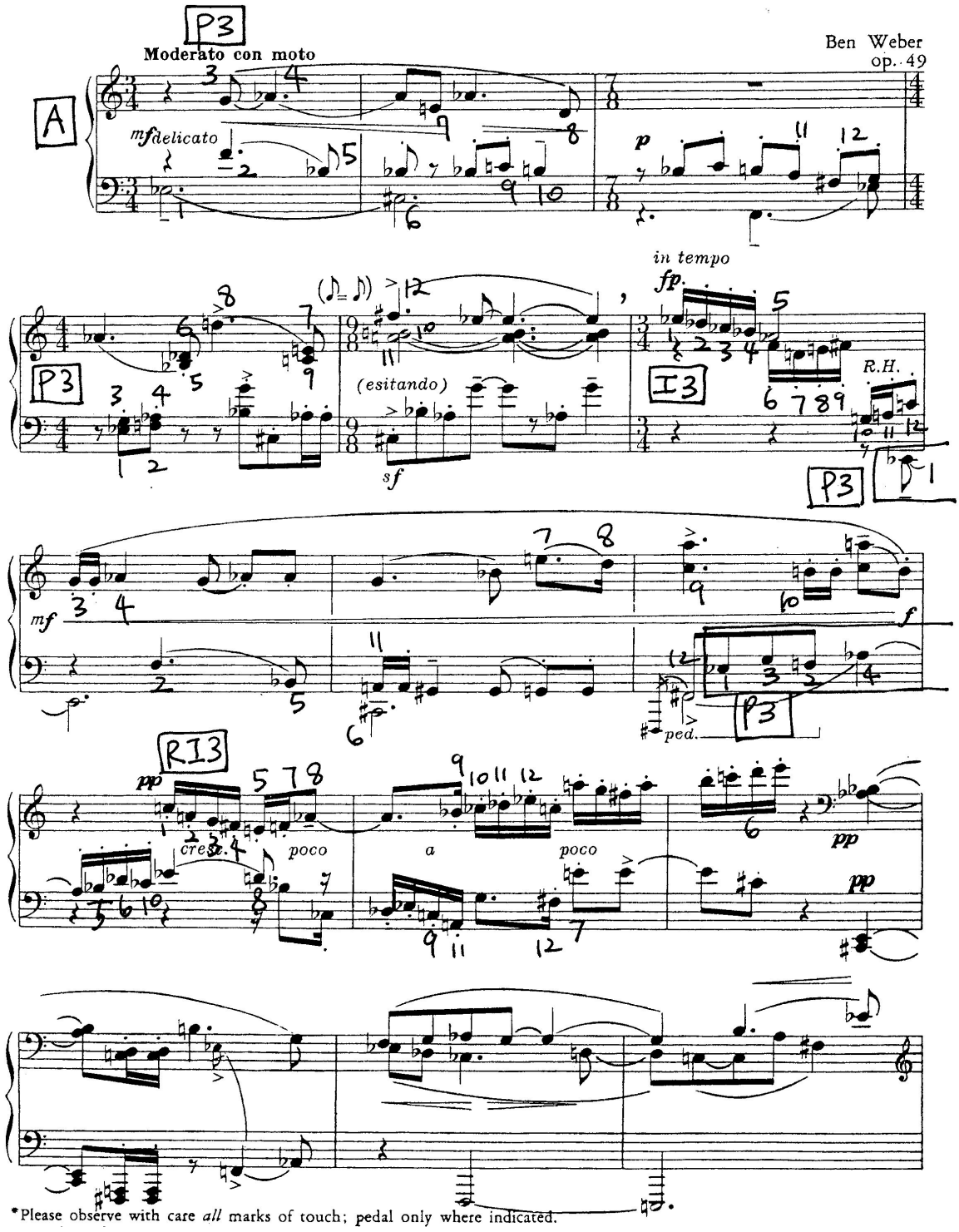


0	2	4	5	7	10	1	11	9	8	6	3
10	0	2	3	5	8	11	9	7	6	4	1
8	10	0	1	3	6	9	7	5	4	2	11
7	9	11	0	2	5	8	6	4	3	1	10
5	7	9	10	0	3	6	4	2	1	11	8
2	4	6	7	9	0	3	1	11	10	8	5
11	1	3	4	6	9	0	10	8	7	5	2
1	3	5	6	8	11	2	0	10	9	7	4
3	5	7	8	10	1	4	2	0	11	9	6
4	6	8	9	11	2	5	3	1	0	10	7
6	8	10	11	1	4	7	5	3	2	0	9
9	11	1	2	4	7	10	8	6	5	3	0

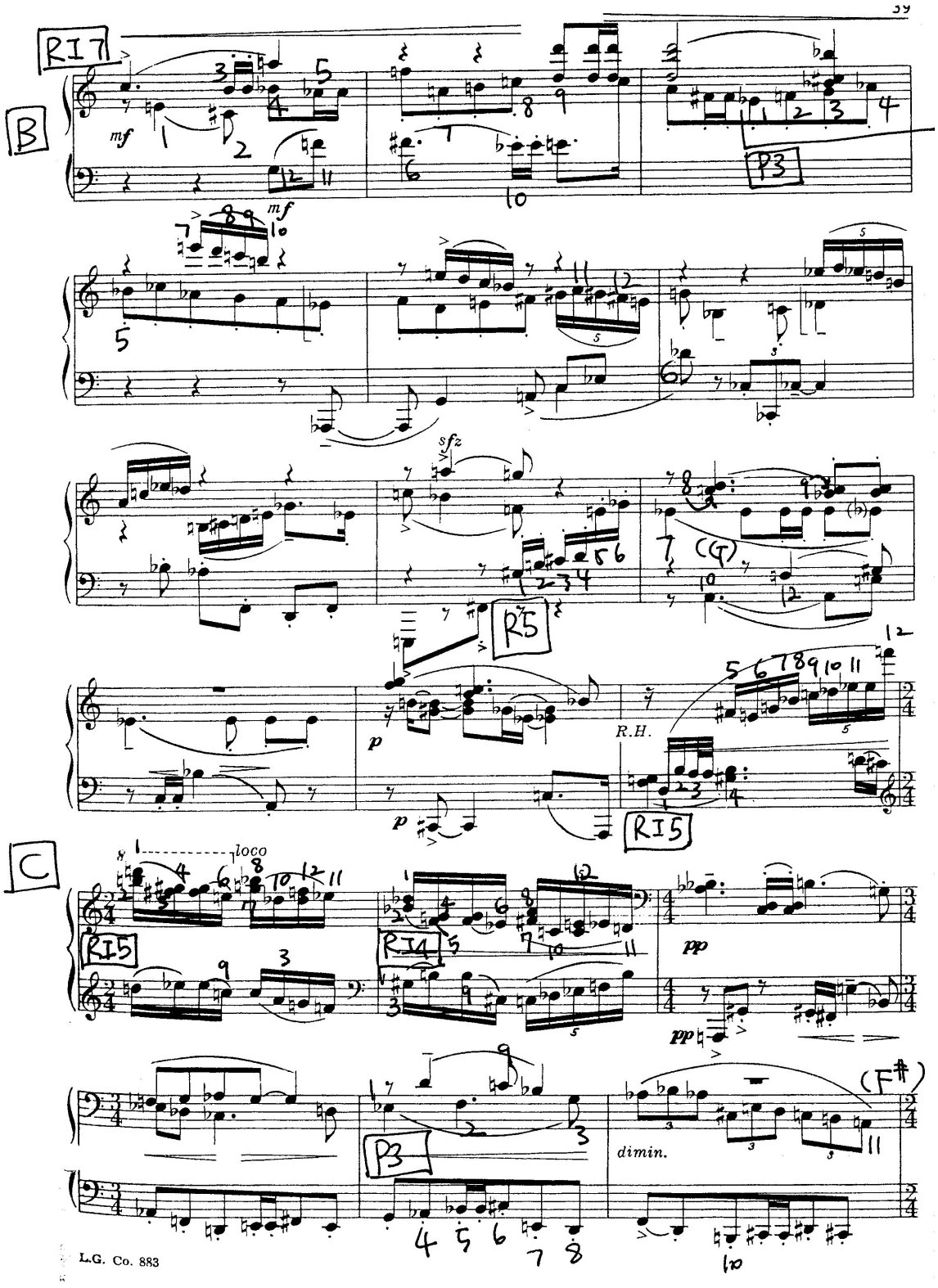
Fig. 4-1: 12 x 12 matrix.

4.3 Twelve-tone analyses

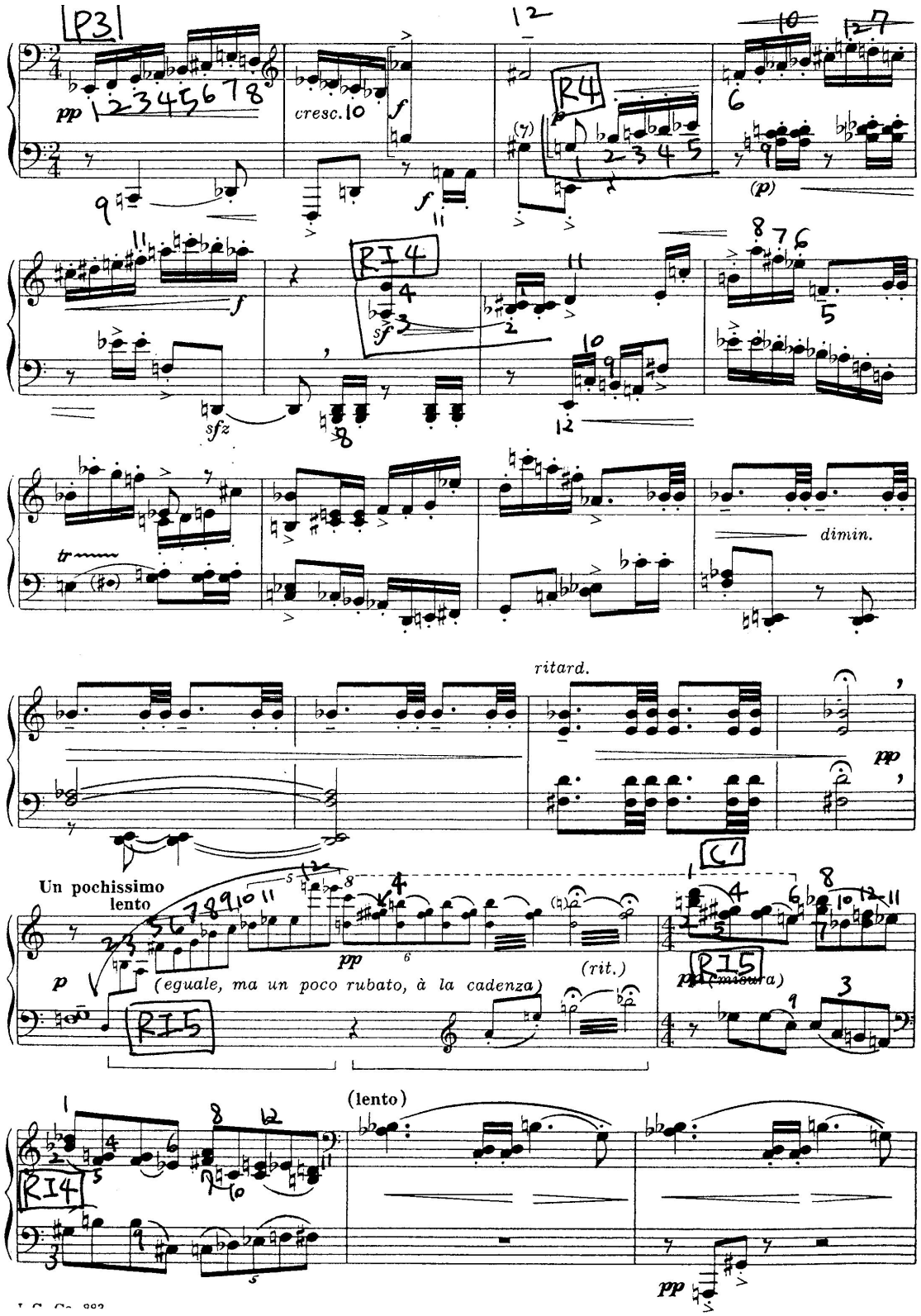
There are a total of nine row forms used in this piece from a single row class: P3, I3, RI3, R4, RI4, R5, RI5, RI7, and R9 (Fig. 4-1, the matrix). P3 is used as the primary row form and appears throughout the entire piece (Ex. 4-5, the twelve-count), and RI4 and RI5 appear frequently throughout sections B and C. The other six row forms (I3, RI3, R4, R5, RI7, and R9) appear only once each. Therefore, Weber is exploring different row forms, but they don't seem to bear great importance as previously mentioned row forms—P3, RI4, and RI5.



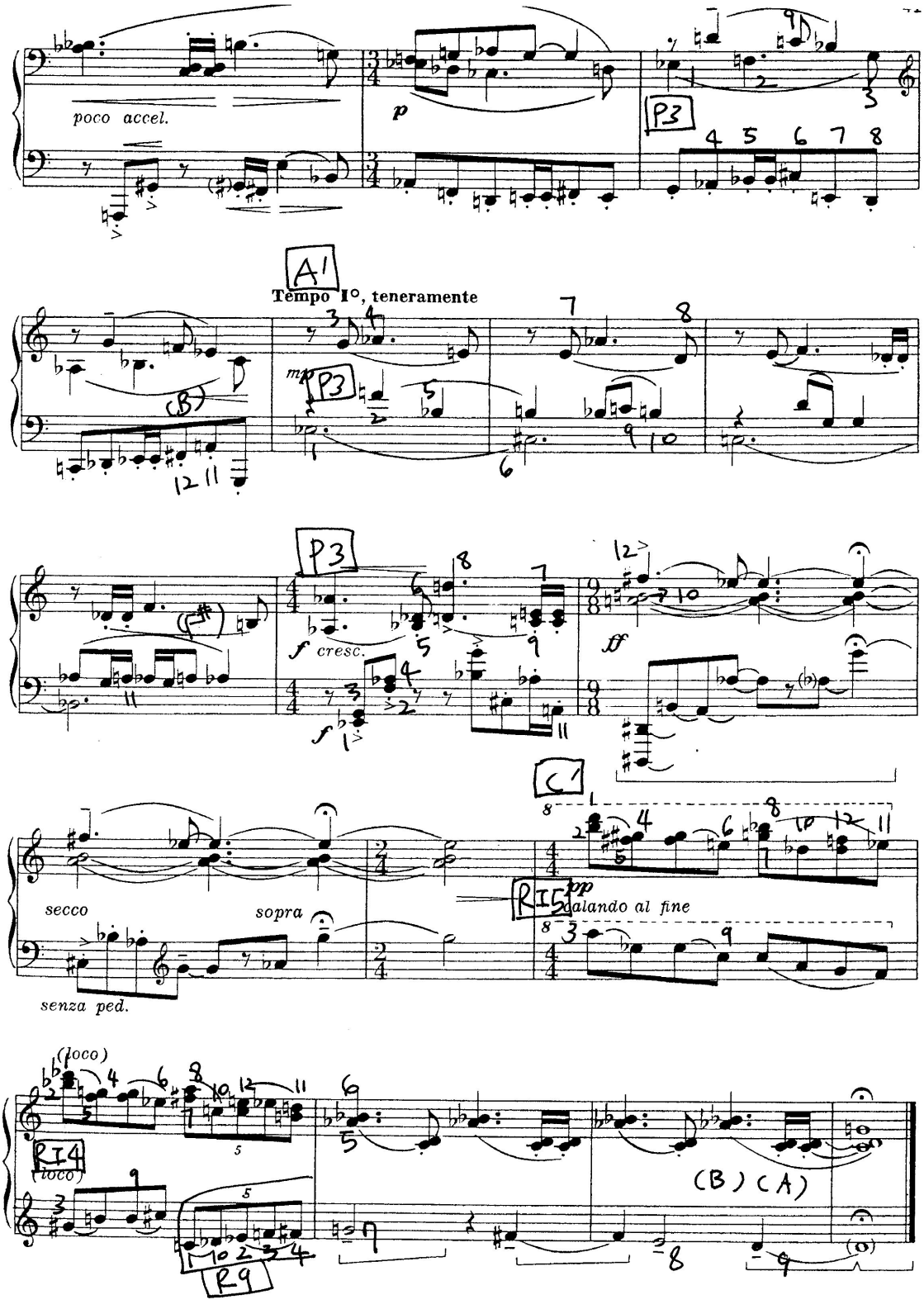
Ex. 4-5: The twelve-count.



Ex. 4-5: The twelve-count continued.



Ex. 4-5: The twelve-count continued.



Ex. 4-5: The twelve-count continued.

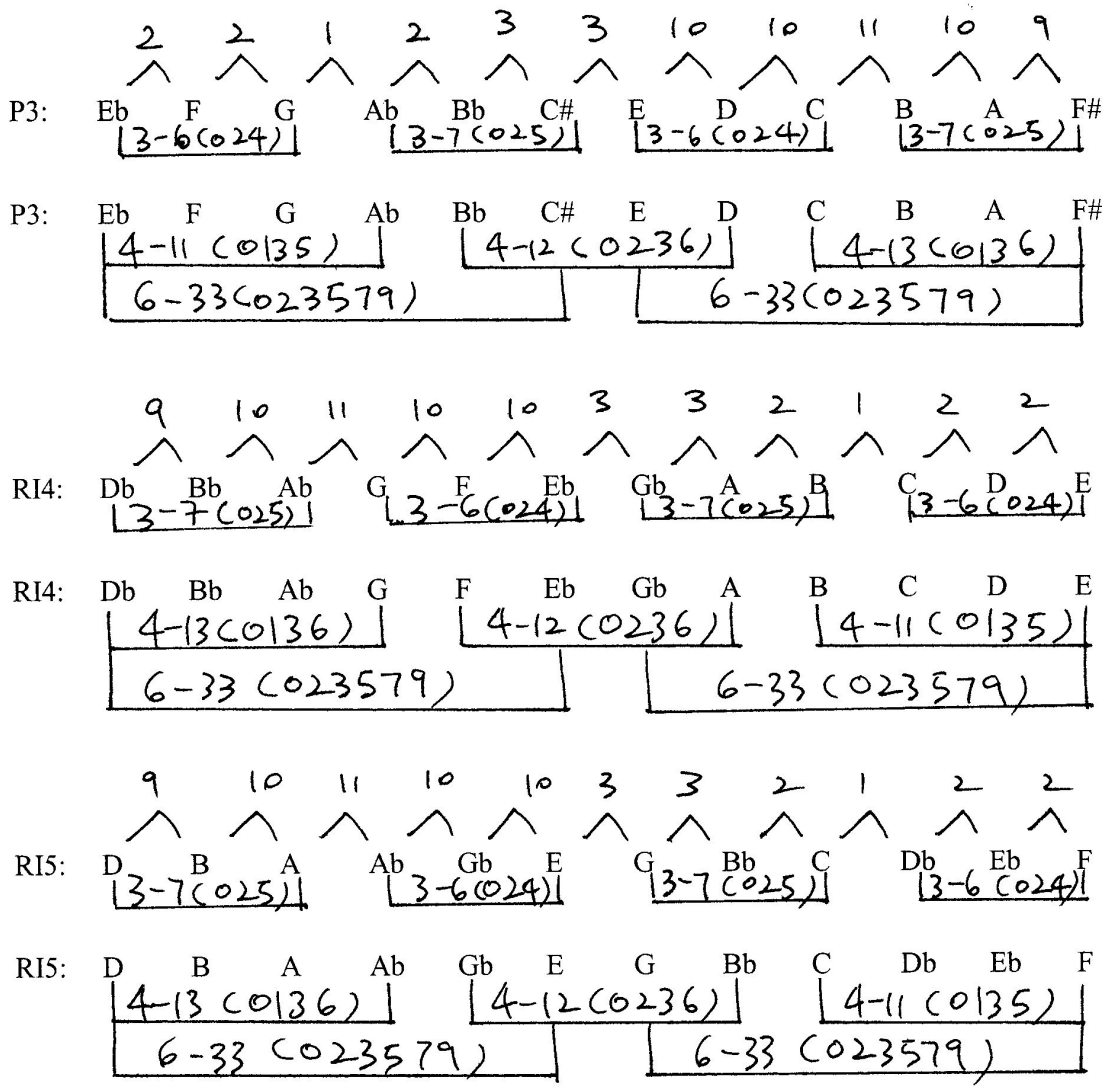


Fig. 4-2: Interval contents and subset of P3, RI4, and RI5.

P3 is made up of two of IC 1, six of IC 2, and three of IC 3 (Fig. 4-2). It is dominated by IC 2s (whole tones), which combined with IC 1s, results in the row form sounding tonal; the first five pitch classes, Eb-F-G-Ab-Bb, make up the beginning of an E-flat major scale, and E-D-C-B-A presents notes of the C major/A minor collection. Also, P3 ends with IC 3 (A-F#, minor third), which together with IC 4s, become significant in creating tonal sounds in this piece.

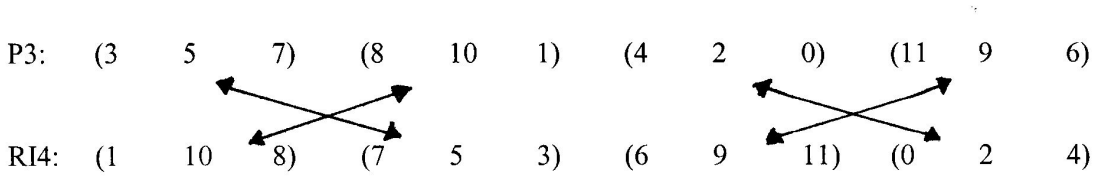
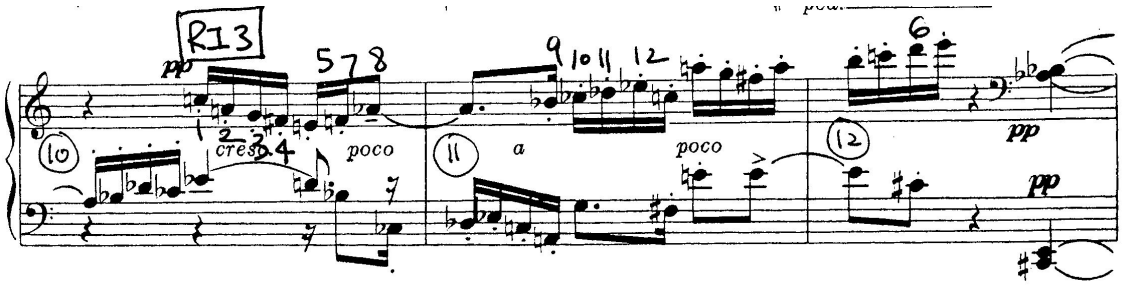


Fig. 4-3: Segmental invariance between P3 and RI4.

All three row forms, P3, RI4, and RI5, share the same numbers of ICs (Fig. 4-2) and the order of the ICs of RI4 and RI5 is exact retrograde of the order of the ICs of P3. Therefore, the opposite hexachords between P3 and both RI4 and RI5 share common properties of intervals, and the parallel hexachords between RI4 and RI5 share common interval properties as well. P3, RI4, and RI5 also share the same discrete subsets of 3-6 (024), 3-7 (025), 4-11 (0135), 4-12 (0236), 4-13 (0136), and 6-33 (023579). Later, we will see that tetrachord 4-11 in particular becomes an important motive in this piece. RI4 and RI5 are related to each other at T1 (T11), therefore, the order of the ICs remains the same.

Another interesting relation among these row forms is that there is evidence of segmental invariance between P3 and RI4. Each trichord maps onto the other, and the pitch classes remain the same with different ordering (Fig. 4-3). More generally, any Pn (or its retrograde) and any In+1 (or its retrograde) will share the same trichords, so the same is true of R4 and RI5. The invariant trichords form an important basis for the choice of these particular series, and the trichords themselves function as recurring motives in the music.

In addition, ordered hexachordal invariance occurs between P3 and RI4; first hexachord of P3 (3578T1) maps onto the first hexachord of RI4 (1T8753), which is an



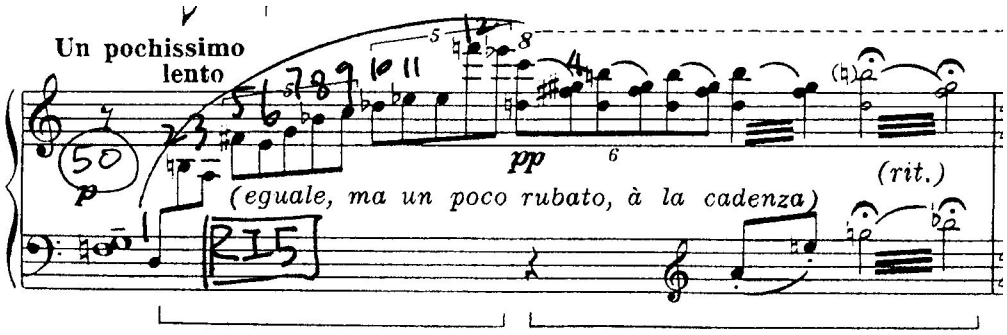
Ex. 4-6: RI3 in linear form in mm. 10-12.

exact reversed order to each other, and the same for second hexachords of P3 and RI4 (Fig. 4-3).

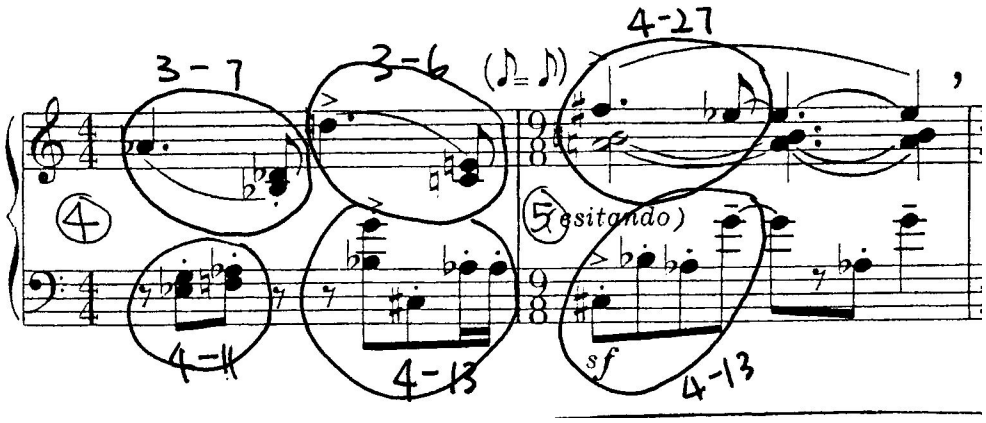
Also, there is an evidence of inversional symmetry in P3 (Fig. 4-2): F-G-Ab-Bb (intervals 2-1-2), Bb-C#-E (intervals 3-3), and D-C-B-A (intervals 10-11-10). This happens in RI4 and RI5 as well.

The row forms are usually presented separately in different voices. Each voice is of almost equal importance, and so the row form is divided into fragments of pitch classes, which are then given to each voice. For example, in the beginning of the piece, P3 is divided up among three different contrapuntal voices: G-Ab-E-D in the soprano voice, F-Bb-C-B-A-F# in the alto voice, and Eb-C# in the bass (Ex. 4-5).

Another good example of the row form presented among different voices recurs in m. 6 where I3 is presented in the A section. It is divided between the soprano voice and the alto voice: the first five PCs Eb-Db-Cb-Bb-Ab in the soprano voice and the remaining seven PCs F-D-E-F#-G-A-C in the alto voice (Ex. 4-5). But there are a few instances where a row form is presented in a more melodic and linear fashion within one voice; for example, in mm. 10-12, RI3 appears in linear form all within the soprano voice (Ex. 4-6), and in m. 50, RI5 appears in similar fashion (Ex. 4-7).



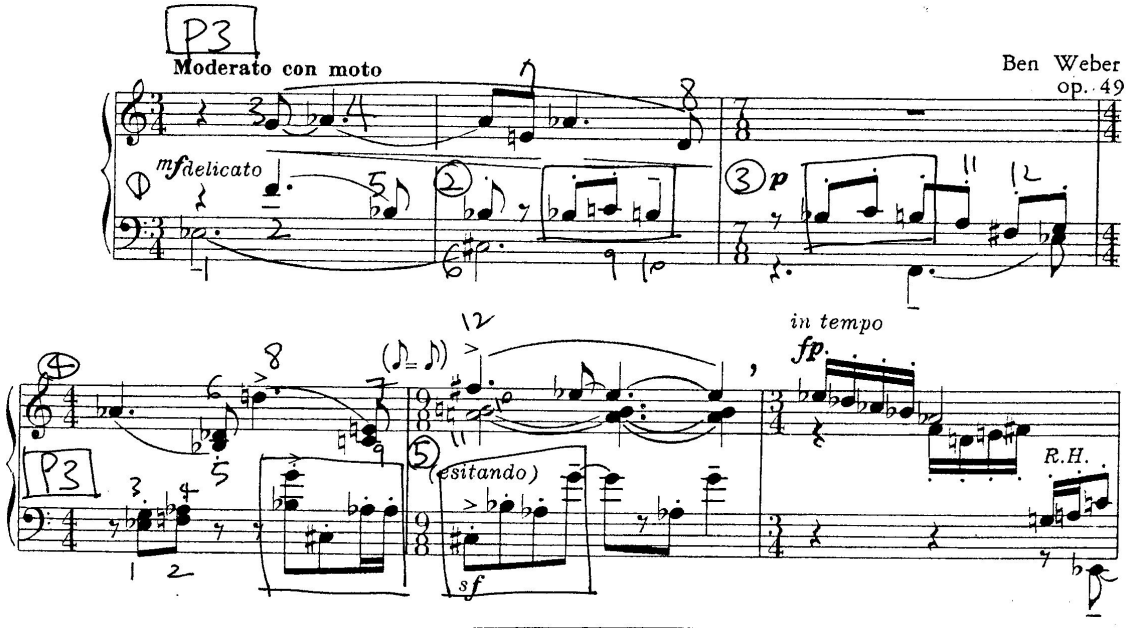
Ex. 4-7: RI5 in linear form in measure 50.



Ex. 4-8: Fragmentary presentation of P3 in mm. 4-5.

Because the pitch classes of the row forms are usually divided up among different voices, they are presented in more fragmentary form; for instance, when P3 appears for the second time at the beginning of the A section in mm. 4-5, it is even more fragmentary than in its first presentation (Ex. 4-8). The segmentation of Eb-F-G-Ab (4-11) which becomes an important motive in this piece is emphasized even more and the row form is divided more clearly into fragments within different voices.

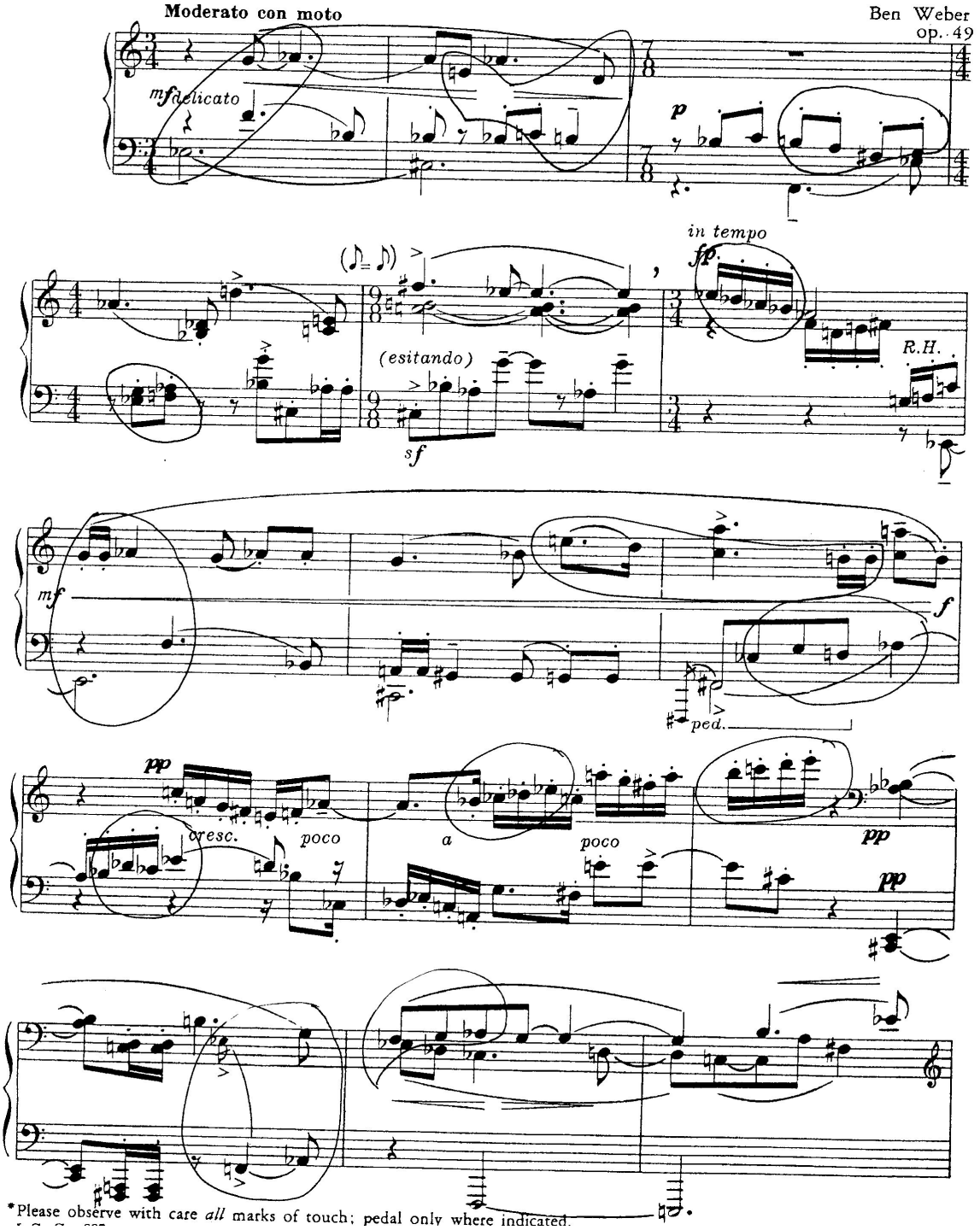
Due to the fragmentary nature of the *Humoreske*, segmentation plays an important role in this piece, both within the presentation of the row form and within the music



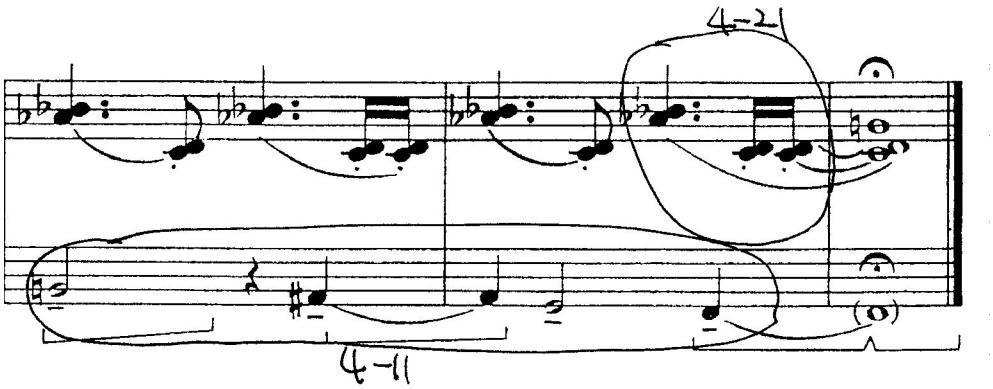
Ex. 4-9: Repeated subsets within the presentation of P3.

where there is no row form present. First of all, within the presentation of the row form, a fragment is repeated to emphasize its importance. For example in mm. 1-5, P3 is presented twice in a row form; subset Bb-C-B is repeated in the first appearance and subset G-Ab-Bb-C# is repeated in the second appearance (Ex. 4-9).

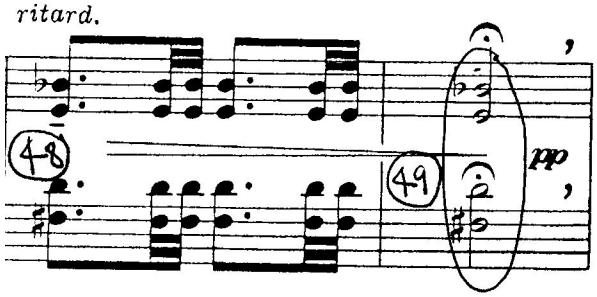
Tetrachords are frequently used as motives, and tetrachord 4-11 (usually with PCs Eb-F-G-Ab, which are the first four PCs of P3) is most favored (Ex. 4-10); among 4-11s, Eb-F-G-Ab is the only discrete tetrachord, and others are formed by notes not adjacent in a row form. This motive appears vertically in between voices, as well as horizontally within one voice. The tetrachord is clearly stated in the left hand at the end of the piece, as if to emphasize the importance of the subset for the last time (Ex. 4-11). Another tetrachord emphasized in this piece is tetrachord 4-11, comprised of PCs E-D-C-B (Ex.



Ex. 4-10: Tetrachord 4-11 (0135) in the A section.



Ex. 4-11: Tetrachord 4-11 (0135) and tetrachord 4-21 (0246) at the end of the piece.



Ex. 4-12: Tetrachord 4-24 (0248) in the chordal section.

4-10; this tetrachord is positioned vertically in between voices in m. 2 and linearly within one voice in m. 12).

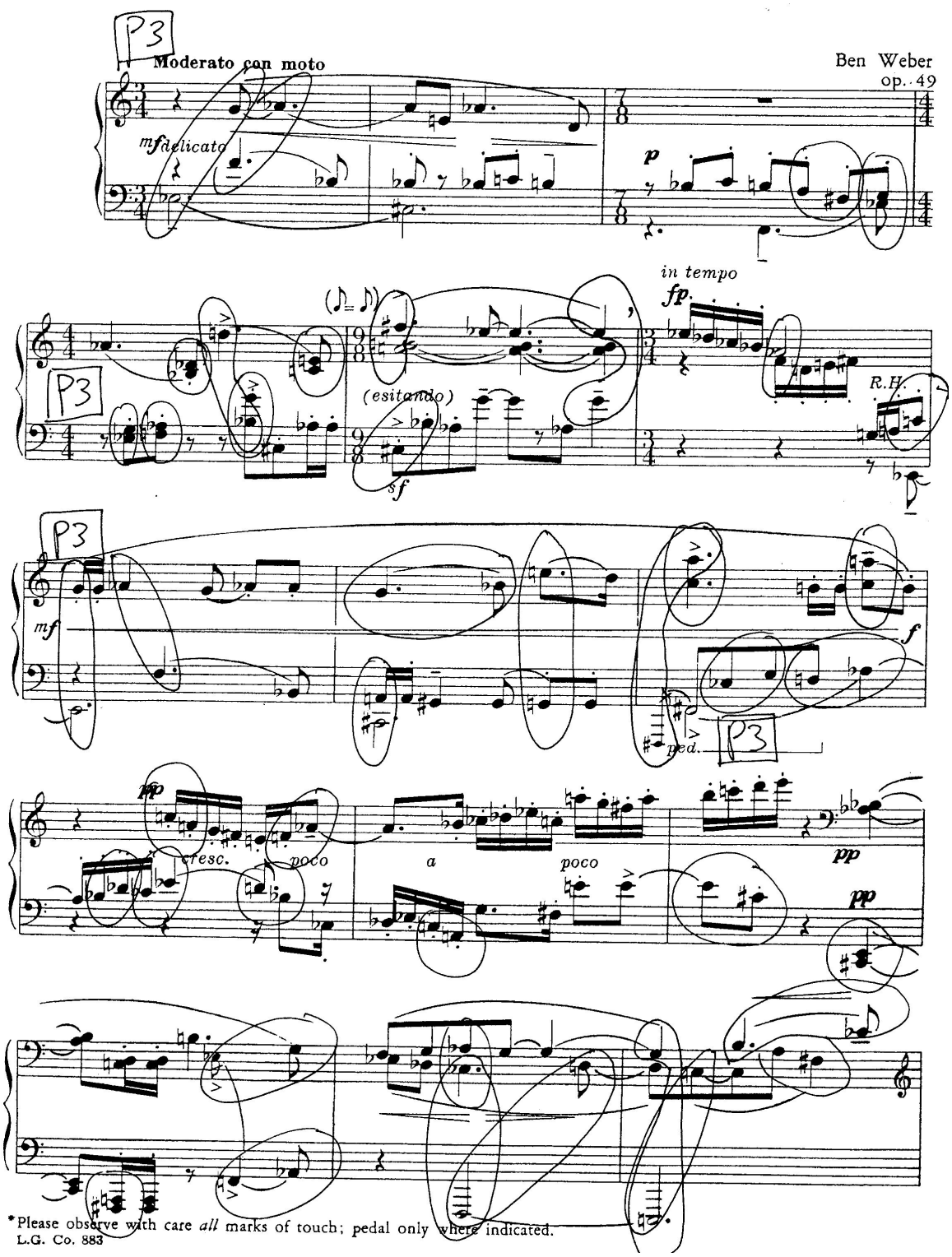
Secondly, throughout most of the piece, there are presentations of different row forms. But there are a few small sections in between the appearances of different row forms, where the role of fragmentation becomes even more significant; for example, tetrachord 4-24 (0248) is used in mm. 48-49 (Ex. 4-12) to create the only chordal section

in the piece, and tetrachord 4-21 (0246), which is a whole tone scale, completes the piece (Ex. 4-11). None of these are discrete tetrachords.

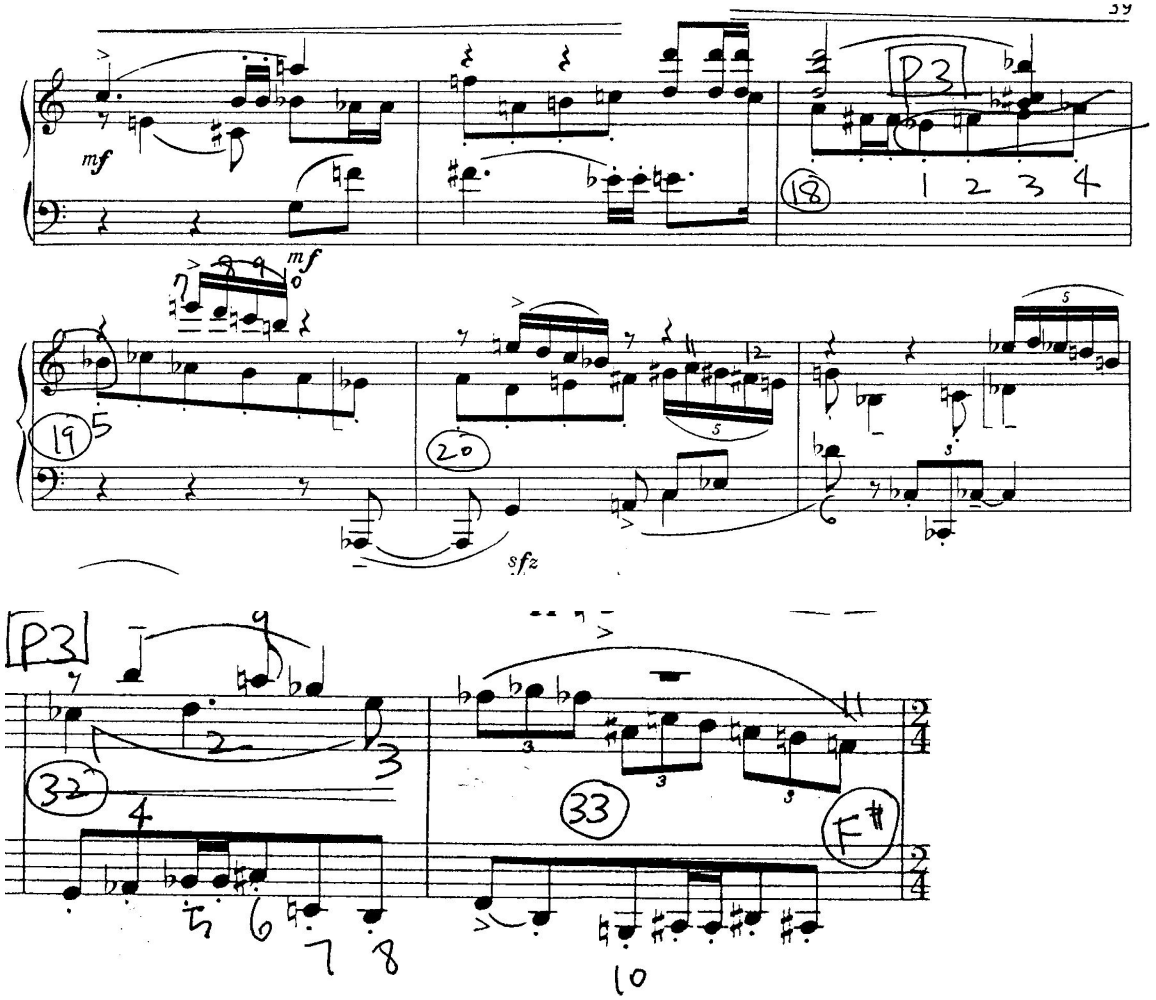
The whole-tone nature of this series and this music is important. As mentioned earlier, the most frequently used interval class in the row form is IC2, and this is displayed in the music; it is evident in the two examples mentioned above (Ex. 4-11 and 4-12), where the whole tone segments Ab-Bb-C-D (Ex. 4-11) and D-E-F#-(G#)-Bb (Ex. 4-12) appear in chordal forms. Also, the tetrachord 4-11 is mostly made up of whole tone intervals.

Intervals classes 3 (minor third) and 4 (major third) also are important motives in the piece. The prime row form ends with the interval 3 (9); in order to emphasize these motives, Weber usually presents two pairs of dyads consisting of ICs 3 and 4 (Ex. 4-13). Besides the dyads Eb-G and F-Ab, these ICs appear everywhere with different PCs (Ex. 4-13). In a few instances, the beginning of P3 appears in the same order of the row form in scalar passages. The row is intended to sound scalar and linear according to the pre-determined order of PCs, but the beginning of the row form is deliberately presented with those motivic ideas at the beginning of the piece, and is presented in more scalar passages in sections B and C (Ex. 4-14, mm. 18-20 and 32-33).

Due to frequent use of motives with ICs 3 and 4 and the scalar nature of the row form, there is a great amount of evidence to support the tonal references of *Humoreske* within the context of a twelve-tone work. First, scalar passages are evident in many places, as can be seen in Ex. 4-10 (with the frequently used tetrachord 4-11) and another good example of scalar passages is apparent in the presentations of P3 and R4 in mm. 34-



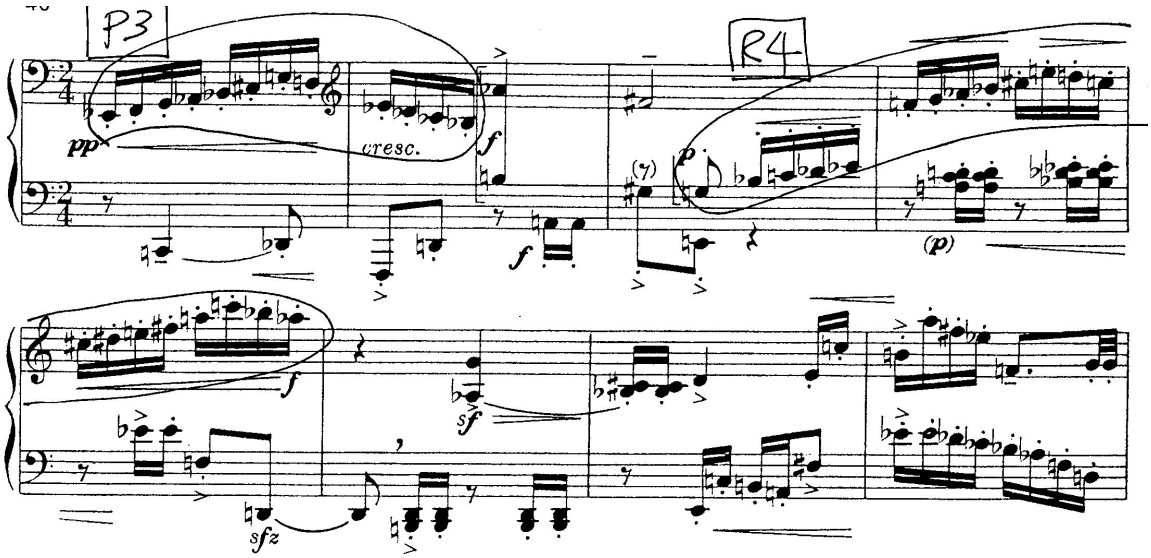
Ex. 4-13: Dyads with ICs 3 and 4.



Ex. 4-14: Scalar subsets of the row in mm. 18-20 and 32-33.

38 (Ex. 4-15). There are six instances of IC 2 present in each row form and this creates scalar passages.

Second, these passages result in pairs of motives with major and minor thirds, which at times are stacked up together to create chordal formations (Ex. 4-16). Moreover, two left-hand chords A-C-D and Bb-Db-Eb in m. 37, are reminiscent of the seventh-chords D-(F#)-A-C and Eb-(G)-Bb-Db. Two other tonal sounding passages occur: in m. 50, where three chords are formed at the fermata (a G# half-diminished seventh chord, a



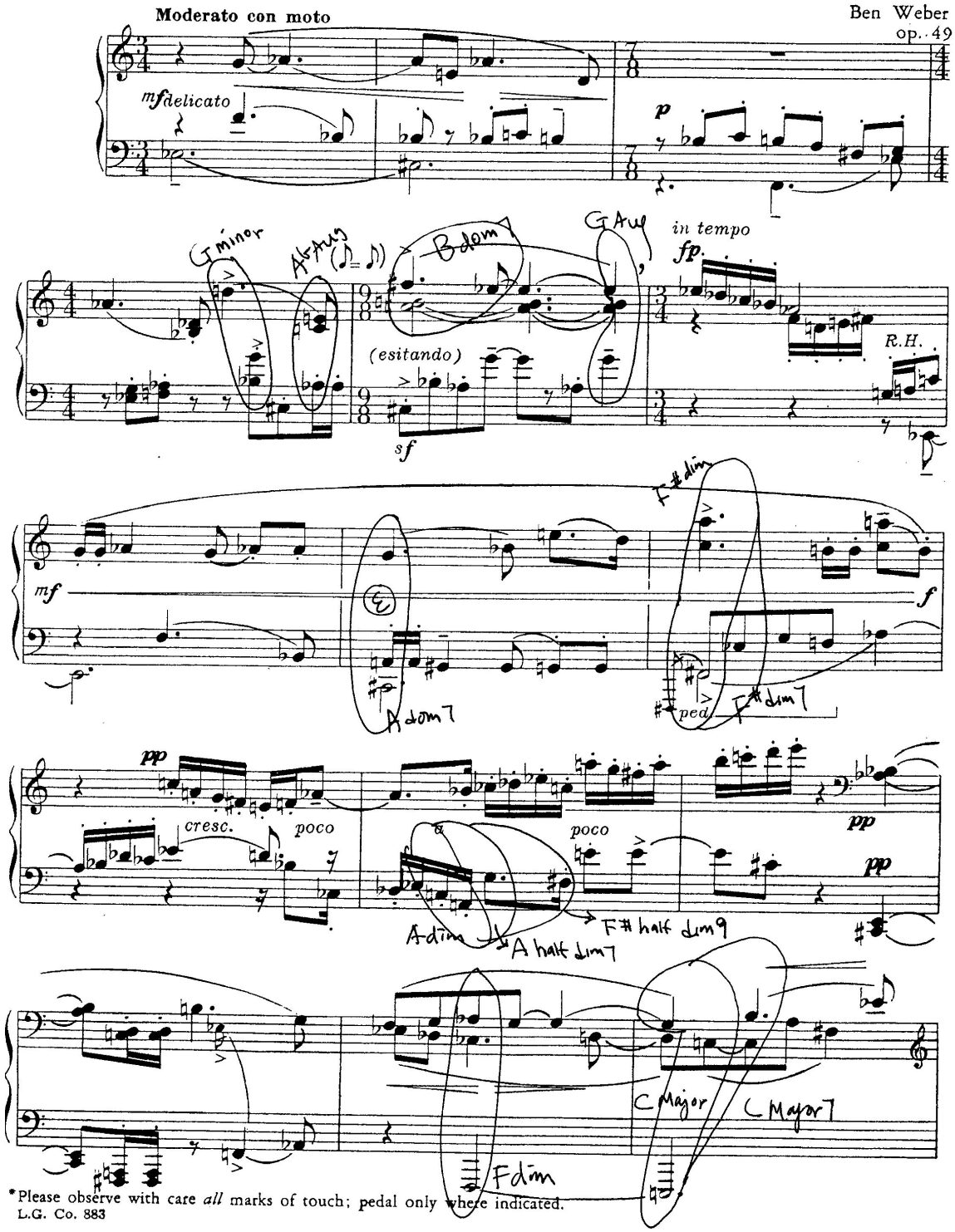
Ex. 4-15: Scalar passages of P3 and R4 in mm. 34-38.

G minor-seventh chord, and a A ninth chord) (Ex. 4-17); and in the last measure of the piece, which includes an open perfect-fifth (with an added second).

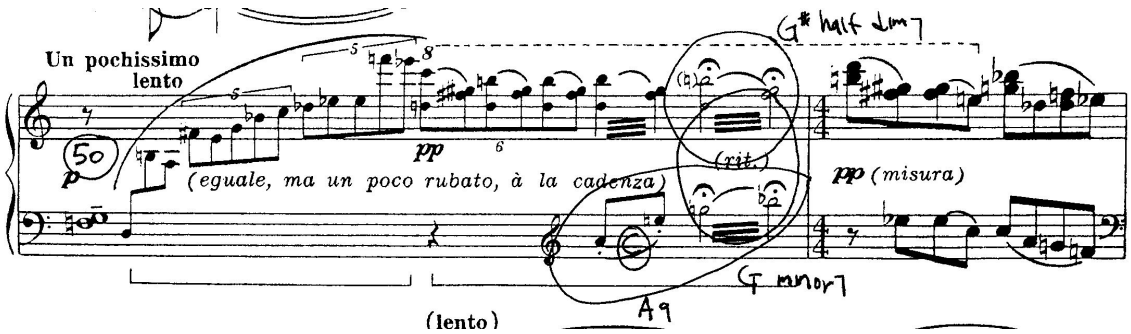
Lastly, Weber focuses on PC B-flat in mm. 45-49. One might argue that E-flat (the first pitch class of the prime row form) and B-flat (which is clearly emphasized in these measures) create an open-fifth interval.

4.4 Conclusion

Weber utilizes a pre-determined row of twelve pitch classes in *Humoreske*. He explores several row forms from one row class; P3 is the prime row form, RI4 and RI5 are constantly presented, and there are explorations of this row class through inversion and retrograde-inversion. These other row forms are stated once each. For most of the piece there are different row forms present, but there are a few instances where there is



Ex. 4-16: Chordal formations.



Ex. 4-17: Chordal formations in measure 50.

no row form present, and the music is made up of different fragmentations derived directly from the row form and the transformation of those segments.

Fragmentation is an important part of the piece. The tetrachord 4-11 is the most frequently used subset segment, and it is embedded in the entire piece; it sometimes appears vertically in between different voices, and other times, horizontally within one voice. Another important motive is formed by dyads of ICs 3 and 4.

Weber creates tonal sound through several formations: the dyad of the ICs 3 and 4, as mentioned earlier; 5th, 7th, and 9th chords, through the addition of several ICs 3 and 4; and scalar passages made up of running sixteenth-notes. Weber explores the twelve-tone technique by stating row forms and experimenting with subsets, then synthesizes the twelve-tone music with references to tonality.

Humoreske is a freely written twelve-tone piece. Row forms are not usually presented in a straightforward way; there are incomplete statements with missing PCs, segments are repeated within the presentation of the row form, and the order of PCs is often changed. In measure 4 (P3), D appears before E to create the interval of 4 (C-E), and this use of the reversal of order to create thirds happens again in measure 9, where G appears before F to create Eb-G and F-Ab. In measure 19, the first four pitch classes of

P3 (Eb-F-G-Ab) are repeated again within the presentation of P3 and when the A section returns at the end of the piece, the pitch class F-sharp is omitted.

CHAPTER 5: Questionable twelve-tone pieces

Fantasia (Variations) op. 25 (1946) & *Intermezzo* op. 64 (1972)

5.1 Introduction

This chapter includes brief analytical accounts of *Fantasia (Variations)* and *Intermezzo*. *Fantasia (Variations)*, which is considered as Weber's most important piano work and one of Weber's best-known works, was Weber's most frequently performed piano composition during his life time.[1]

Pianist George Bennette said of this piece: "There are few American piano compositions of this century equal to it in scope and conception…rich in expressive quality and technical display, it is an extension of the piano style that developed in the late nineteenth-century."[2] *Fantasia (Variations)* is indeed a master piece with a unique concept of combination of variations, passacaglia, and fantasy, and it embodies the pianistic style which continued from the late nineteenth-century--such as chromatic harmony, clusters of thick chords, and virtuosic technical display.

Intermezzo was the last piano composition Weber completed before his death in 1979; therefore, it raises a particular interest as to find out what kind of compositions he was writing in his late years.

Both pieces are worth studying because of the reasons above, but they are not twelve-tone pieces in the conventional sense. Weber had a reputation as a twelve-tone

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[1] George Bennette, *George Bennette Plays Music by Ben Weber and Nikos Skalkottas* (Desto Records-stereo DC 7136, 1973), extracted from the back cover of the record, "Notes by George Bennette."
[2] Ibid.

composer, and throughout this dissertation, I am exploring the ways in which that characterization is accurate, and trying to show what kind of twelve-tone language he uses; but in this chapter, titled "Questionable twelve-tone pieces", I am suggesting the ways in which *Fantasia (Variations)* and *Intermezzo* do not conform to traditional twelve-tone procedure through brief analyses of both pieces.

5.2 Brief Analyses of *Fantasia (Variations)*

Fantasia (Variations) was composed for Weber's companion William Masselos,[3] who premiered the work at Carnegie Hall in 1949. Masselos was known for his incisive, individual performances of contemporary and American music; he was one of the most respected pianists of his time. John Gruen praises Masselos in his article as following: "There is no question that William Masselos must today be ranked a giant in his field--a phenomenally equipped pianist able to encompass the widest possible repertory, and possessed of an interpretative and technical spectrum of astonishing color, variety, and dimension."[4]

Weber describes his relationship with Masselos and his feelings towards him in his *Memoir* (which is dedicated to him): "But there is a kind of a yearning feeling in him (Masselos) that touches something in me, and it arouses more than my musical instinct…it brings me spiritually close to him."[5] Weber's love and Masselos'

[3] Masselos was one of the two executors of Weber's will (the other was Matthew Paris) and one of the directors of the Ben Weber Foundation.
[4] John Gruen, "He talks best at a piano," *New York Times*, March 14, 1971: D13.
[5] *Memoir*, chapter 4.

tremendous technique had major influence on the writing of the *Fantasia (Variations)*.[6] Again, Weber wrote in his *Memoir*, "So I write pieces for my lovers. But when I dedicate a piece, I don't do it idly. I never did it with success on that level except with Billy Masselos…the Fantasia is a kind of bond between us. I wrote that piece very slowly as a matter of fact and it is very genuine…when I wrote the fantasia deliberately, note for note, I was really making love to him through the avenues of sound. This is a kind of marriage through music that exists between him and myself. I have never loved anybody as I have loved him."[7]

According to a pianist Stephen Hough, the work is titled with great precision: the title "Fantasia" is stated first, then the title "Variations" is stated later in smaller letters and in brackets.[8] As will be further discussed, this is an indication that the fantasy section, which is essentially the third part of the piece (there are basically three large sections in this piece), bears the most importance out of the three sections; or rather, it can be assumed that this piece is principally a fantasy.

Fantasia (Variations) is an intensely expressive, highly contrapuntal, and extremely virtuosic work. This piece offers a complexity of rhythm, a diversity of registers on the keyboard, and a thick romantic texture that incorporates chords and octaves. There are frequent changes of mood, dynamics, tempo, and meter, which are obvious influence of the late-romantic period. This piece also embodies plenty of tonal sounds; especially the kind of late-Romantic harmony reminiscent of Brahms, Liszt, and Scriabin. We also find many Brahmsian arpeggios and broken chords in this piece.

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[6] Weber also wrote for Masselos, *Three Pieces for Piano*, *Episodes for Piano*, and *Piano Concerto*.
[7] *Memoir*, chapter 4.
[8] From "Notes by Stephen Hough", from his album *New York Variations* (Hyperion: London-CDA67005, 1998).

Fantasia (Variations) was published by the American Composer's Alliances' Facsimile Edition in 1957, by Marks Music in 1966 (New York), and was included in the Contemporary Composer's Catalogue. *Fantasia (Variations)* was recorded by William Masselos for Epic Records (1964), by George Bennette for Desto Records (1973), and by Stephen Hough for Hyperion Records (1998) under the title *New York Variations*.

The form of this piece consists of several smaller units that are held together within a larger form. There are three main sections in this piece: the variations section begins the piece with fifteen measures of the theme, continuing with four variations followed by five measures of interlude; the passacaglia section has eight measures of ground bass theme followed by three variations of the theme; and finally, the piece finishes with a free fantasy section and a short coda at the end.

The variations (a total of seven including four from the variations section and three from the passacaglia section) are not just episodes, but constitute a progression that culminates in the fantasy section, which is the most important part of this piece according to the title. The passacaglia is in a slower tempo, in a lower register, and is more serious in character. It is based on a ground bass theme, and the three variations following the theme are based on two additional independent voices elaborated on top of the ground bass. This is also the only section in the entire piece where there is no meter change.

The texture is highly contrapuntal throughout the variations section and the passacaglia section; although in variations 3 and 4 (the variations section), the texture becomes thicker and more chordal, and eventually the fantasy section is dominated by extreme virtuosity with elaborate passages and even thicker chords. There are three or

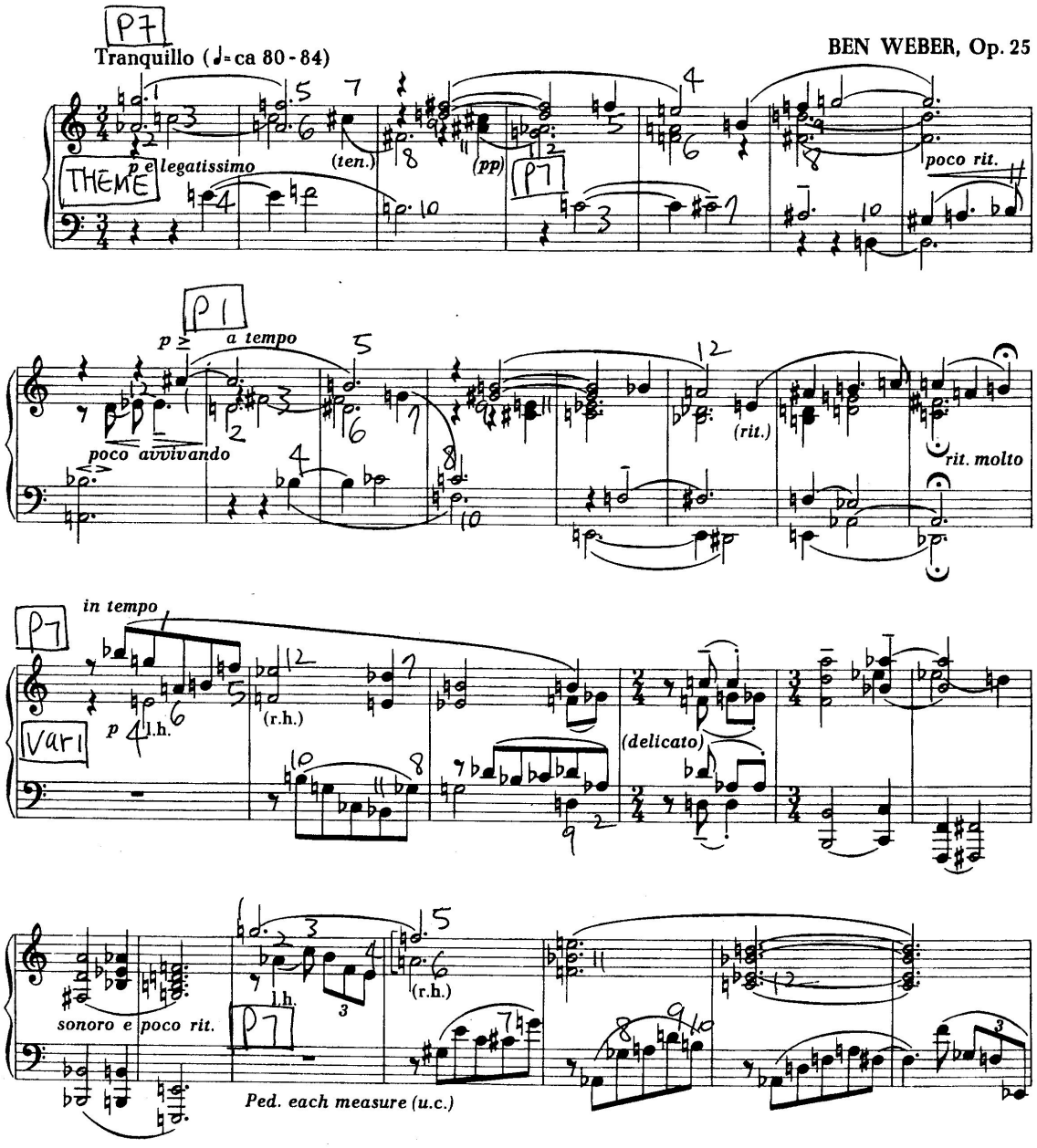
four independent voices throughout variations 1 and 2 (the variations section), and there is a three-voice counterpoint in the passacaglia section.

Something very interesting happens in the fantasy section (mm. 188-232): a gradual meter shift occurs from 3/4 (m. 188 at the beginning of the fantasy section) to 2/4 (m. 196), then to 3/8 (m. 211). This drives the piece to the culminating point, which is the end of the fantasy section; and finally arrives a short, brilliant coda, which is a collection of clusters of notes played fortissimo.

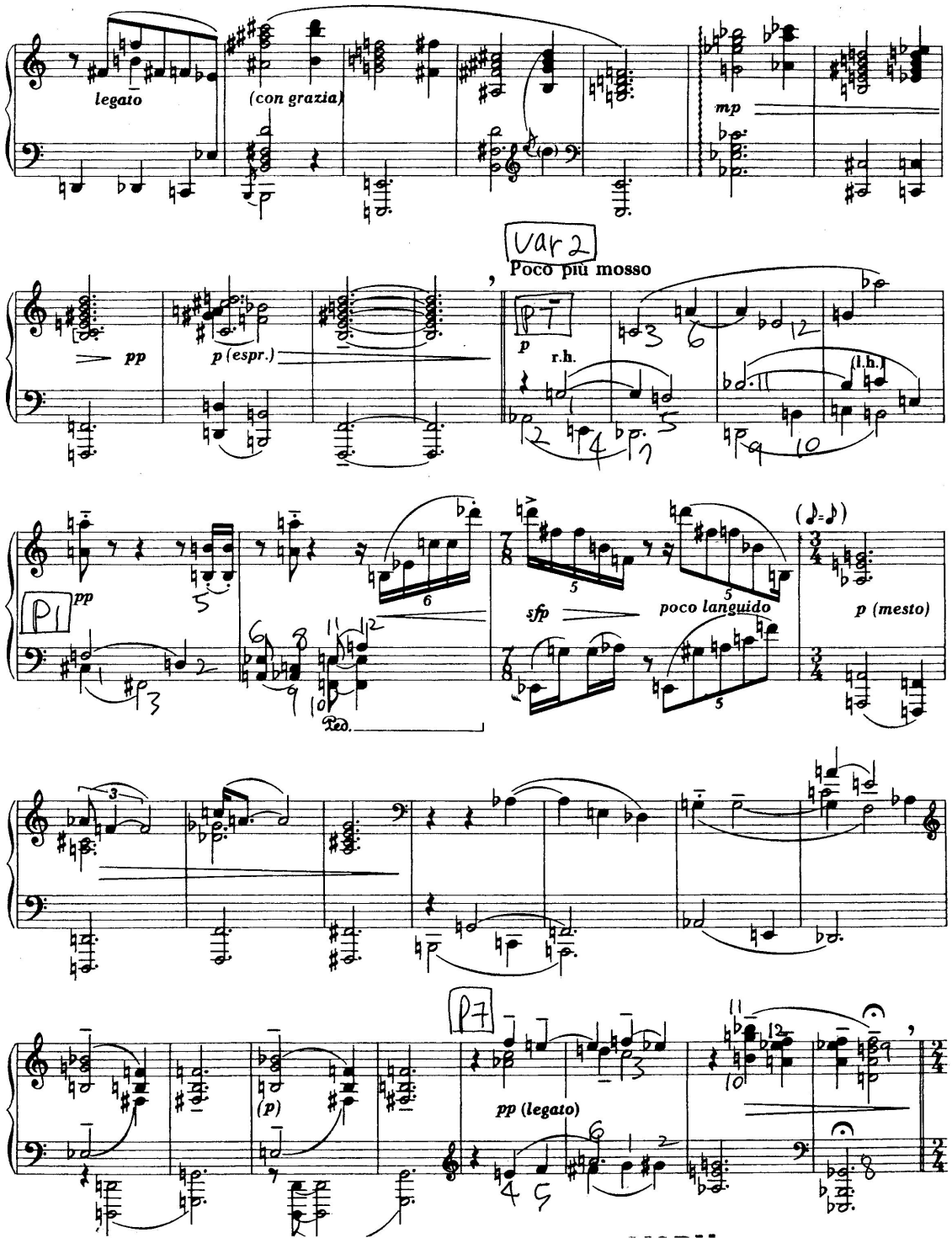
The row forms used in the beginning of the piece[9] are P7 (G-Ab-C-E-F-A-C#-F#-D-B-Bb-Eb), which is the prime row form, and P1 (C#-D-F#-Bb-B-Eb-G-C-Ab-F-E-A) (Ex. 5-1, the twelve-count). The most frequently used interval in the prime row form is IC 4 (major third); this is evident in the music (Ab-C, C-E, F-A, A-C#, and F#-D), and this interval class makes the row form sound tonal (Ex. 5-2). In this section (the beginning of the piece), P1 only occurs twice, where as P7, the prime row form appears several times; and it is presented rather freely, than strictly. Sometimes, the presentation of the prime row form seems to resemble unordered groups of specific pitch classes than groups of PCs with serial order.

This piece is also based on two hexachords (both are the same set class 6-14: 013458) which derive directly from the prime row form: E-F-G-Ab-A-C (labeled as X, Ex. 5-3) and its complement Bb-B-C#-D-D#-F# (labeled as Y, Ex. 5-3). These hexachords are in fact, the two hexachords of P7, and the row form exists more as a source for unordered PC collection (hexachords) than a serially ordered line. In the previous chapters, I have discovered that Weber was more focused on experimenting

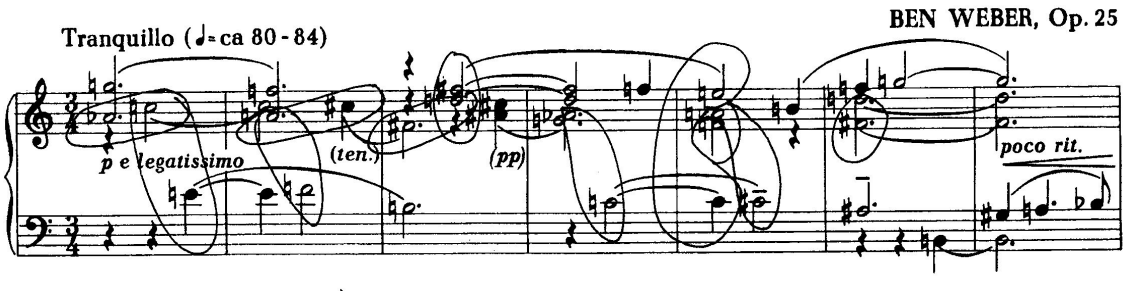
[9] The attempt of the twelve-tone analyses of *Fantasia (Variations)* is limited only to the beginning of the variations section of the piece (theme, var. 1, and var. 2). I am only offering a brief analytical account of this piece.



Ex. 5-1: The twelve-count.



Ex. 5-1: The twelve-count continued.

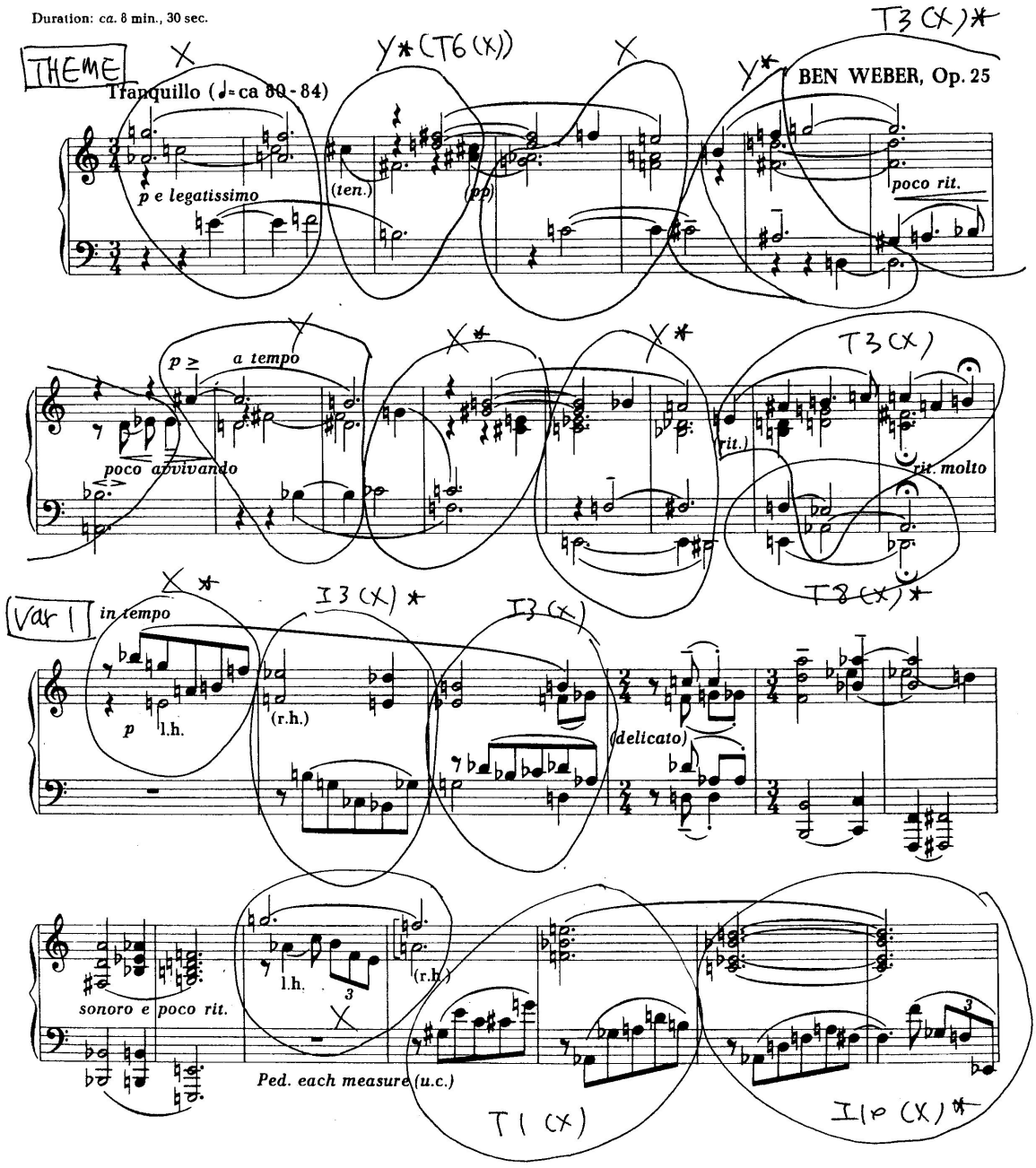


Ex. 5-2: IC 4s embedded in the row.

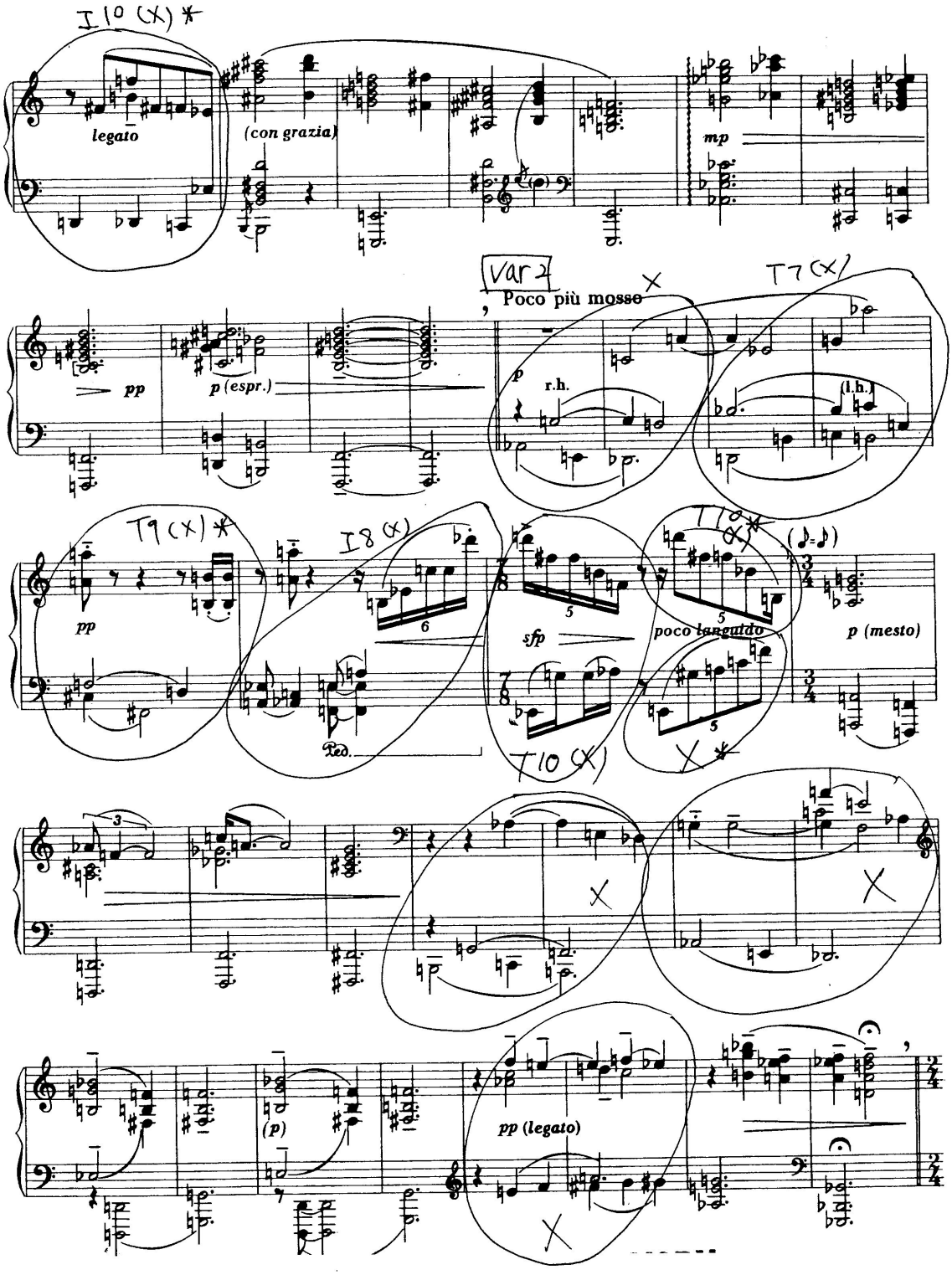
with subsets (usually trichords and tetrachords) derived from the row rather than with serial presentations of the row; in this piece, the subset happens to be hexachords.

X is often paired with its complement Y (related to X at T6) creating the row form; both X and Y are sometimes presented in a less than obvious way, and Y is sometimes presented incomplete (labeled with *). Neither X nor Y seems to have a definite serial ordering, rather they are used as unordered collections; although in X, it seems as though G/Ab are usually first, then C/E, then F/A, so there is a sense of ordering, but it is not strictly maintained.

Besides hexachords X and Y, there are other hexachords used as well which are related to X by transposition and by inversion (Ex. 5-3). This set class has twenty-four members related to X by T or I (Fig. 5-1), and each member's complement hexachords are always related at T6 (this is because this set excludes the tritone, so when transposed by a tritone, it maps onto its complement). Some of the other hexachords used are hexachords G-G#-Bb-B-C-D# (T3 (X)), D#-F#-G-G#-Bb-B (I3 (X)), D-D#-F-F#-G-Bb (T10 (X)), and Bb-C#-D-D#-F-F# (I10 (X)). Structurally, the hexachord X is the foundation of this section, and it is presented throughout; and the hexachord Y only



Ex. 5-3: Hexachords E-F-G-Ab-A-C (X) and Bb-B-C#-D-D#-F# (Y).



Ex. 5-3: Hexachords X and Y continued.

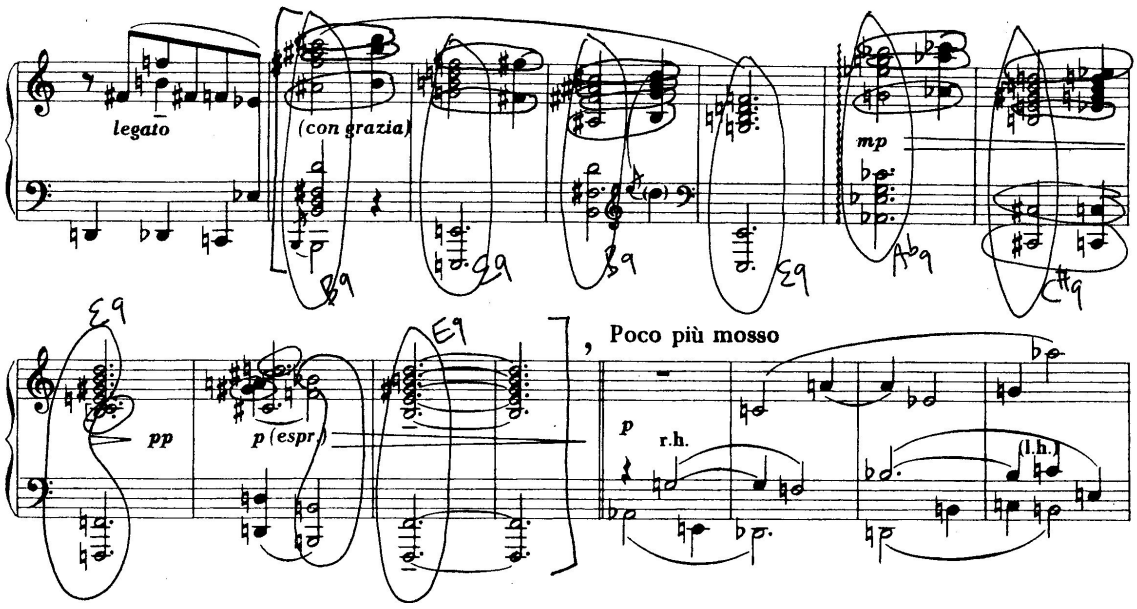
4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 0 (10, 11, 1, 2, 3, 6)	0, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 (6, 9, 10, 11, 1, 2)
5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 1 (11, 0, 2, 3, 4, 7)	1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 (7, 10, 11, 0, 2, 3)
6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 2 (0, 1, 3, 4, 5, 8)	2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 (8, 11, 0, 1, 3, 4)
7, 8, 10, 11, 0, 3 (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9)	3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11 (9, 0, 1, 2, 4, 5)
8, 9, 11, 0, 1, 4 (2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10)	4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 0 (10, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6)
9, 10, 0, 1, 2, 5 (3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11)	5, 8, 9, 10, 0, 1 (11, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7)
10, 11, 1, 2, 3, 6 (4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 0)	6, 9, 10, 11, 1, 2 (0, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8)
11, 0, 2, 3, 4, 7 (5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 1)	7, 10, 11, 0, 2, 3 (1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9)
0, 1, 3, 4, 5, 8 (6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 2)	8, 11, 0, 1, 3, 4 (2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10)
1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9 (7, 8, 10, 11, 0, 3)	9, 0, 1, 2, 4, 5 (3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11)
2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10 (8, 9, 11, 0, 1, 4)	10, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 (4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 0)
3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11 (9, 10, 0, 1, 2, 5)	11, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 (5, 8, 9, 10, 0, 1)

Fig. 5-1: 24 members related to X by T (left column) and I (right column), and in parenthesis are complementary hexachords.

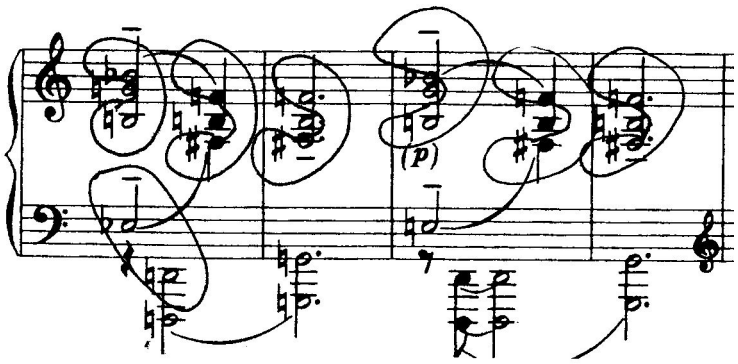
appears in the theme section. T3 (X) appears in the theme section, I3 (X) and I10 (X) in the first variation, and T10 (X) in the second variation.

In addition to the row form statements and several different types of hexachords, this section (the beginning of the piece) is also based on IC 1s (minor second, Ex. 5-4) embedded everywhere (this also happens within the row: G-Ab, E-F, and B-Bb), which is the most frequently used IC in set class 6-14, and chordal formations based on thirds forming tertian chords (Ex. 5-4). Although IC 1s sometimes appear vertically which creates the harsh dissonance (Ex. 5-5; in fact, the first chord of this piece is made of PCs G-Ab), they usually move horizontally as a melodic motive rather than a harmonic motive (as evident in Ex. 5-4).

Tertian chords create thick, dense, late-Romantic harmony. These small sections that utilize motives of IC 1 and tertian chords stand in contrast to the contrapuntal texture of the variations and passacaglia sections, and the elaborate fantasy section.



Ex. 5-4: Melodic motives of IC 1s and tertian chords in mm. 30-39.



Ex. 5-5: IC 1s presented vertically.

5.3 Brief Analyses of *Intermezzo*

Intermezzo is Weber's last completed piano composition; actually a pair of two short pieces called *Ciaconna & Capriccio* (op. 68, 1979) and *Piano Sonata* (op. 71, 1970) exist, but they are incomplete.

The term "intermezzo" was used since the early nineteenth-century for independent pieces, often for piano solo; and they were predominantly lyrical.[10] Weber's *Intermezzo* is lyrical with a thick, chordal, homophonic texture (melody with an accompaniment) which is maintained throughout most of the piece. The three-measure introduction before the melody (which is presented in the soprano voice in m. 4) resembles a type of a song, and there is more than enough drama created in this rather short piece through frequent changes of dynamics, meter, and tempo. This piece is reminiscent of intermezzos by Brahms and here is what Weber said of this piece: "I wrote a comparatively brief piece called *Intermezzo* that without imitating Brahms, somehow went back to the romantic way of writing for the piano."[11]

Intermezzo was published by the Facsimile Edition by the American Composer's Alliance (1972).

With the expression marking *Andante Rubato*, Weber's *Intermezzo* is based on a thick chordal texture (mostly made of thick chords and octaves) and a continuous triplet rhythm. There are usually three voices present and the soprano voice has the melody.

In *Intermezzo*, Weber is less focused on the contrapuntal writing mentioned in previous chapters; here, he is more interested in melody and accompaniment writing (with a less significant inner voice). The three voices present in this piece are not of equal importance; rather, the soprano voice dominates, since it carries the melody.

There are many aspects of this piece that are representative of late-Romanticism: thick texture with big clusters of chords and octaves, sudden dynamic changes, the expression marking *Andante Rubato*, which indicates great freedom in the piece, and

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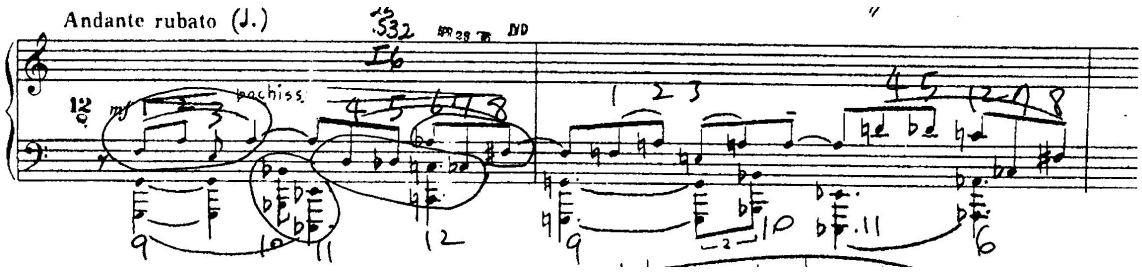
[10] Maurice J. E. Brown, 'Intermezzo', *Grove Music Online* edited by L. Macy (Accessed November 1, 2007), <http: //www.Grovemusic.com>

[11] *Memoir*, chapter 4.



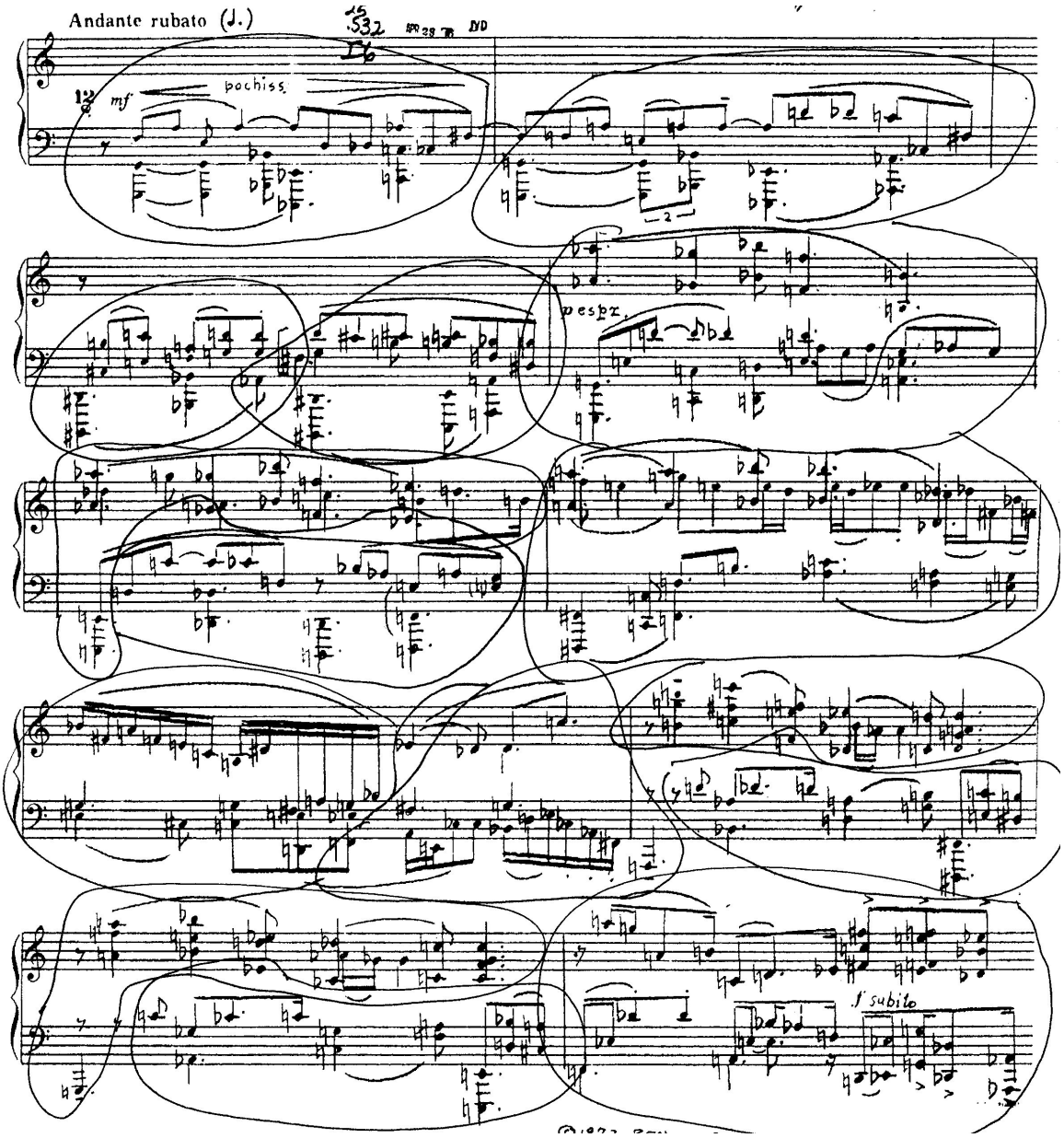
Ex. 5-6: First two aggregates in mm.1-2.

frequent meter shifts. The meter shifts mostly between compound meters (6/8, 9/8, and 12/8).

Weber used a kind of twelve-tone method, but not in the conventional sense. He does not lay out a row form as a melodic theme and then explore the various members of the row class (related via T, I, and R). Rather, Weber composes with the aggregates of all twelve-notes, but these are shaped in a variety of ways without a regard to a serial order. In mm. 1 and 2, we get a clear aggregate statement twice, both embodying almost the same serial order; therefore, it is right to imagine it as embodying a row for the piece, but it is not a row in the sense of systematically maintained serial order (Ex. 5-6). Rather, groups of notes are associated within the first aggregate (Ex. 5-6) and these associations are either maintained or changed in subsequent aggregates.

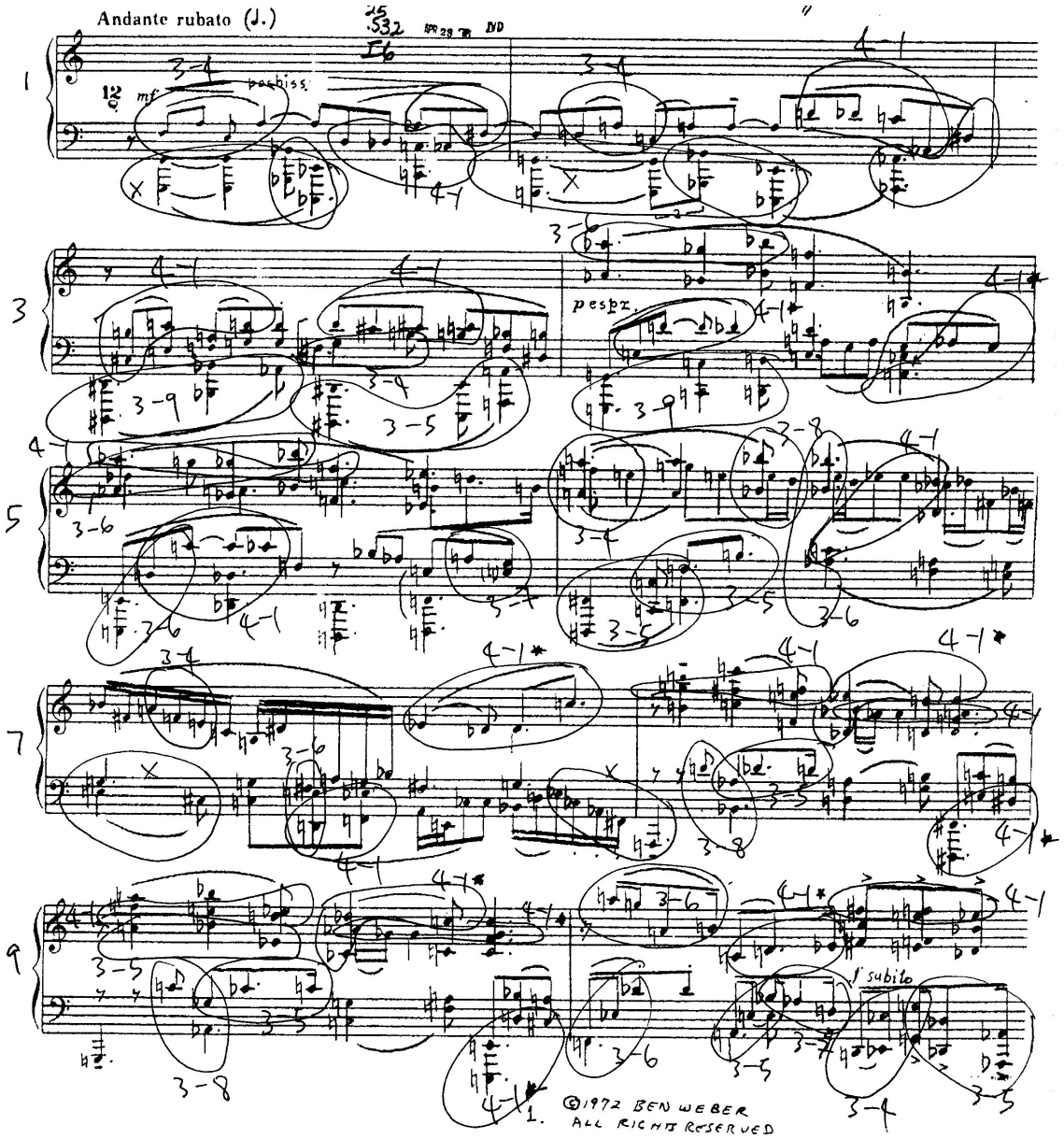
In Ex. 5-7, the beginning part of *Intermezzo* is divided into aggregates.[12] Some earlier associations are maintained: [Eb, Bb], [E, F, A], [D, Db, C, B], and [F#, Ab]. Especially prominent is the trichord [E, F, A] (3-4: 015, the first three PCs of this piece), tetrachord [D, Db, C, B] (4-1:0123), and other members of these set classes (Ex. 5-8). The set class 4-1 is the foundation of the beginning of this piece; it appears at least once

[12] The attempt of the twelve-tone analyses of *Intermezzo* is limited to only the beginning part of this piece. I am only offering a brief analytical account of this piece.



Ex. 5-7: Aggregates.

in each aggregate, where as the set class 3-4 appears less frequently. The set class 4-1 sometimes appears incomplete (marked with * in Ex. 5-8); when it is presented in incomplete version, it is usually missing one pitch class, and usually appears as either 3-1



Ex. 5-8: Trichord 3-4, tetrachord 4-1, and other set classes.

(012) or 3-2 (013). As we can see in Ex. 5-8, some of the other groups of notes which recur are set classes 3-5 (016), 3-6 (024), 3-7 (025), 3-8 (026), and 3-9 (027).

There are some chordal formations evident here (marked with x in Ex. 5-8): [Eb, G, Bb] in mm. 1 and 2, [C#, E, G] in m. 7, and a tertian chord [Ab, Cb, Eb, F#, A] in mm. 7-8.

5.4 Conclusion

Both the *Fantasia (Variations)* and *Intermezzo* are somewhat questionable twelve-tone compositions. We find that there are row form statements in *Fantasia (Variations)*; but the piece seems to be governed by the use of unordered hexachords (there is a sense of ordering, but it's not strictly maintained) than the presentations of the row forms—the prime row form exists more as an unordered collection of all twelve PCs than a serially ordered line. This is evident in *Intermezzo* as well; Weber uses all twelve pitch classes throughout the piece, but they are used as aggregates, not as serially ordered collection. Clusters of notes recur within each aggregate as different set classes, but there is no sense of systematically maintained serial ordering.

There is nothing written on *Intermezzo*; but according to Stephen Hough, *Fantasia (Variations)* is a piece using the twelve-tone technique.[13] *Fantasia (Variations)* does embody row form statements; but it seems as though (as far as what I have studied) Weber is more interested in exploration of the hexachords and infusing tonal sounds through IC 4s and chordal formations, than serial ordering of the row form and set classes.

Both *Fantasia (Variations)* and *Intermezzo* represent the synthesis of elements late-Romanticism, references to tonal sounds, and freely adopted twelve-tone technique.

[13] Hough, "Notes by Stephen Hough."

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Weber's twelve-tone language is unique. He takes the twelve-tone technique of Arnold Schoenberg, the idea of structuring a piece of music based on a pre-determined order of all twelve pitches, and incorporates his own ideas. He used the technique as a formal basis for his compositions, but he deliberately challenged the principles of twelve-tone technique for his individual style.

Throughout the analytical studies done during last four chapters, it is evident that Weber often uses only one row class within a composition, but he does utilize different versions of a single row form (within a single row class) through transposition, inversion, and retrograde. When there are multiple rows used, they maybe closely related to each other through segmentation. For example, in *Five Bagatelles*, Weber takes segmentations of the unordered sets from the row in the first bagatelle, then he creates new rows for following bagatelles from it. Also, some of these segmentations often become the main motive of the row; for example, the main motive from the row used in the fourth bagatelle Eb-A-B-F# is derived from the motive F#-A#-Eb-C, which is one of the discrete subsets of the row used in the first bagatelle.

Row forms are usually stated between voices, and they are stated freely; there are fewer instances where the row forms are presented in a straightforward way, rather, they are presented with reversed order of PCs, with repeated PCs and repeated segmentations, or in incomplete form (with missing PCs). Weber says: "The restriction imposed by rigid

adherence to the arbitrary arrangement of the twelve chromatic tones is a 'theoretic thing', I have a much more romantic temperament myself."[1]

Weber had a completely opposite view on this matter compared to a composer such as Milton Babbitt; to him, fulfilling emotional purpose of the music was more imperative than sticking to the "rules." In fact, Weber goes as far as saying: "I think a piece is over when it has fulfilled its emotional function, the twelve-tone row that is chosen does not affect the length or the shape of the piece; the row has no governing fuction in a piece."[2]

Within the serial format, Weber focuses on segmentations. He treats the row segments independently as motives building a whole piece, not just as a part of a row; Weber breaks up the row into smaller subsets which can operate as separate elements functioning along with complete statements of the row. Weber uses this procedure, but he tends to repeat the segments several times before presenting the rest of the row; this is probably done for the musical reasons and to emphasize the importance of subsets.

These motives (subsets) usually occur as trichords and tetrachords (the exception is the hexachords in *Fantasia (Variations)*); recurring throughout each piece, they become the building blocks of a piece. For example, in the second bagatelle, the row is partitioned into two main sections (the first seven pitch classes in the treble clef and the remaining five pitch classes in the bass clef); furthermore, the bass clef is subdivided into two fragments, one of which is the most important subset of this bagatelle--the trichord Db-Bb-E (3-10: 036). Subsets are typically presented linearly; but when appearing vertically, they usually serve as chordal accompaniment.

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[1] Anthony Bruno, "2 American Twelve-Tone Composers: Milton Babbitt and Ben Weber Represent Opposing Views," *Musical America* 71 (1951): 22.
[2] Ibid.

In many instances, the subsets are treated independently and there is considerable freedom of ordering within repeated subsets; they are treated almost as unordered pitch class sets than ordered segments. Weber is more preoccupied with the manipulation of subsets than the repeated presentation and transformation of the row.

Throughout the pieces studied in this project, there are many examples which show that Weber was interested in invoking tonal sounds and making references to diatonicism. Weber states, "By and large since 1938 my music has been usually atonal……but sometimes I have written pieces which have strong functional and tonal impetus, or at least tonal implication."[3] Although Weber experiments with the twelve-tone technique and serial technique, it is hard to find him consistent; the use of the twelve-tone technique is entirely dependent on his personal needs at the time of writing.

Weber makes references to diatonicism through scalar passages, repeated PCs, chordal formations, octave doubling, octatonic scale, whole-tone scale, and certain intervals which create tonal sounds. Scalar passages appear frequently in his pieces; for example, the first four PCs of the first bagatelle are F-E-D-C#, and the first seven PCs of the second bagatelle are F-F#-G-A-B-C-D. Certain intervals such as the ICs 3 (minor third) and 4 (major third) help create chordal formations; and they are apparent throughout Weber's pieces. They usually appear as major, minor, augmented, and diminished chords, and sometimes as extended chords of stacked thirds creating seventh-chords and ninth-chords.

In conclusion, Weber explores the twelve-tone technique both by using complete orderings of the twelve pitch classes and by experimenting with various subsets derived

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[3] Stephen Hough, *New York Variation* (Hyperion: London-CDA 67005, 1998), from "Program Notes by Stephen Hough."

from the row. But his exploration of the technique is not too adventurous; in fact, it is rather minimal. And his adaptation of the technique is rather free; this is obvious in free presentations of the row, with his preoccupation with unordered subsets rather than the row as a whole, his experimentation with the eleven-tone row form in the first bagatelle, and in the use of unordered twelve-tone aggregates in *Intermezzo*.

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